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FREE

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Pipeline Project Questioned

By Lori Sonken

Landowners in Dryden and Freeville are angry about the \$1 offer they received from the New York State Gas and Electric Corp. (NYSEG) for a permanent easement giving the utility the right to use their property to install and maintain a 10-inch underground gas pipeline, and permission to sell the easement to third parties.

"I feel like I'm getting the shaft by NYSEG. They would give me \$1 to tear up my property. It feels insulting," said Stephen Merlin, a Freeville resident. He spoke at a meeting on Jan. 15 organized by the Dryden Town Board. After first hearing from the public, the town board turned to NYSEG's representatives for a response.

NYSEG contends that the distribution pipeline is needed to reinforce the system in Ithaca, to bring power to three new residential projects and one mixed use project in Lansing, and to provide new capacity for the future.

As planned, the seven-mile-long steel pipeline, known as the Lansing-Freeville Reinforcement Project, would carry natural gas along Route 34B and West Dryden, Farrell and Warren roads from an existing connection with Dominion Transmission Inc.'s interstate pipeline in



Bob Pass, regional community outreach and development manager for NYSEG, answers questions during a hearing in Dryden regarding the utility's gas pipeline project.

Freeville to the Town of Lansing. The pipeline would tie into existing facilities at Warren Road, where a new regulator station would be built to reduce gas pressure in the pipeline to Lansing.

Some opponents are concerned that the pipeline would be used to fuel the Cayuga Power Plant in Lansing. But project manager, David Bovee, refutes this. "This pipeline will not be used to reposer the Cayuga Power Plant," he said.

Since October the utility has been asking about 100 landowners to sign easements granting permission to use land 15 feet from the edge of the pavement. It's not clear how many landowners have signed, or

if any landowner has requested more than the \$1 NYSEG is offering. This information is confidential, said Jennifer Negus, real estate representative for NYSEG's Ithaca division.

Dryden Supervisor Mary Ann Sumner, councilwoman Linda Lavine and councilman Greg Sloan asked NYSEG representatives to rewrite the easement to make it less vague. NYSEG representatives declined to make changes to the the form they say is used company-wide, but they will consider amendments proposed by the landowners. As written, the easement requires landowners to retain liability for the pipeline.

"Each easement is negotiated on a one-to-one basis.

We negotiate each easement with each landowner," Negus said.

"Why force these nice people to spend their money and hire their own lawyer to specify all the proper things that should go into the easement?" asked Lavine. She echoed comments made by West Dryden Road resident Sue Stein and others that many people cannot afford to pay a lawyer to negotiate an easement.

Despite pleas from Sumner and Lavine to NYSEG to change the easement template and a request to talk with someone at NYSEG about modifying the language in the easement, Bob Pass, NYSEG's regional community outreach and development manager, made no promises. "I cannot comment if we are able to do that," he said.

If easements are not granted, "eminent domain is an option," said Bovee, the project manager. He is not clear on how the eminent domain process would unfold. NYSEG intends to begin construction this summer.

Councilman Sloan questioned the tactics used by NYSEG to get landowners to sign the easements. He said residents have told him they were discouraged from hiring a lawyer and were told that their neighbors had signed an easement

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Morey, Snyder in Special Election

By Nick Babel

Voters in Tompkins County's 9th District will choose between Republican candidate Glenn Morey, Groton Town Supervisor, and Democrat Neil Snyder, also of Groton, in the Feb. 10 special election to fill the unexpired term of former Tompkins County legislator Brian Robison.

Robison resigned at the end of November to accept appointment as Tompkins County Undersheriff. The 9th District comprises the Town of Groton and portions of the towns of Dryden and Lansing.

"My experience includes leading the Town of Groton for the last 15 years. I bring knowledge of energy sourcing, computer technology and telecommunications as a strategic sourcing manager for Cornell University," Morey says. "I am a member of the Finance Committee for the Tompkins County Council of Governments' Health Insurance Consortium, I am chairman of Groton Youth Commission and serve on the Groton Community Council. All of the positions I have held require the ability to interact with diverse groups and to communicate effectively."

Snyder says that his values make

him a strong candidate to represent the district. "I am a middle-class person with middle-class values. I have always believed that good government means that the values of the middle class will be taken into account when legislation is being written," he says. "I have served the people of Tompkins County in a variety of roles for years and realize that good government means being able to work with a variety of people. The legislature is made up of a diverse group of people who make it their business to work together. They are inclusive and not exclusive when they sit down to craft legislation."

Both candidates have spent many years in local politics. "My experience as Groton Town Supervisor from 2000 to present, and village trustee from 1991 to 2000, will help me at the county level," says Morey. Among his accomplishments as supervisor, he says, are "maintaining a virtually flat tax rate that is actually lower than what it was 15 years ago," keeping the Town of Groton debt-free and maintaining a healthy fund balance, updating Groton's zoning and land use laws to protect property rights and obtaining \$900,000 in housing grants to benefit low to medium income homeowners.

Snyder cites his experience working with the community. "I have worked on at least four campaigns and have extensive experience meeting and speaking with the voters of the Town and Village of Groton. I have worked behind the scenes to insure that elections run smoothly and have managed three polling sites in Tompkins County for five years," he says. His experience includes providing technologies and services to institutions that include the Federal Reserve Bank, Temple University and a variety of corporations. He has also worked in the financial products and services area. "In Tompkins County I have served the public for eight years on the front end of a local grocery store."

Both men spoke about their reasons for running for this legislature position.

"I want to maintain the same dialogue that Brian Robison started for the needs and benefits for the rural community of District 9. Our needs are not the same needs of the larger communities in Tompkins County. We require more work in infrastructure such as roads, agricultural needs such as getting the product to market and

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Pipeline

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when in fact they had not.

Negus said she accompanied a contractor walking door-to-door to the majority of households where easements are sought. "We would never say to not go to a lawyer. It's a legal document," she said.

The easement grants NYSEG a permanent right of way "...for the underground transmission and/or distribution of natural and/or manufactured gas for public or private use...."

Sloan asked whether it would be possible to add a transmission line adjacent to the distribution line in the future. "This easement is a camel's nose. I can understand people's concerns," he said.

Bovie explained that a transmission line and distribution line should be four to six feet apart. It might be possible to put the two lines next to one another in the right of way, he said.

Bovee said the initial flow capacity of the line is 700 thousand cubic feet per hour. Of this amount, 328,000 cubic feet per hour will be used to meet existing needs, provide backup power, and provide gas for proposed new developments. This raises the question of what will be done with the remaining capacity.

"The pipe is over-designed by a factor of 20," said Anthony Ingraffea, an engineering professor at Cornell.

Aside from questions regarding the easement and the pipeline's capacity, some residents object to building new infrastructure that will continue the county's dependence on fossil fuels. Tompkins County's stated goal is to reduce by

20 percent the 2008 greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050. The new pipeline would allow for a free natural gas hook-up for homes located within 100 feet of the pipeline.

NYSEG is owned by Iberdola, a multinational company based in Spain and operating in dozens of countries. In addition to NYSEG, Iberdola is the parent company of Rochester Gas and Electric Company, and several other utilities in the northeastern U.S.

Election

Continued from page 1

youth services such as youth employment. Groton and sections of Lansing and Dryden which are included in District 9 are rural areas," says Morey.

Snyder looks to make his voice heard for the people of the District. "I have worked for Tompkins County for the past five years and have always wanted to make a difference. I can think of no greater contribution to my town and the towns and villages around me than to be a strong voice for the voters of the 9th District," he says.

There are many issues facing their constituents and each candidate has some ideas for what they look forward to working on if elected.

"Making Groton and its rural neighbors a safe and peaceful place to live is the top item on my agenda. Employment that pays a living wage for everyone who needs a job is also critical. My action plan will always include making sure that every tax dollar that is spent is used effectively and efficiently. I want every voter to be confident that their concerns will be promptly

and satisfactorily addressed," Snyder says.

Morey looks to continue the work he has started with the legislature as supervisor. "First of all, we've been working on consolidation of services throughout the county municipalities. The success in the past is with health insurance. Recently, we've also looked into court systems and into sharing of information technology services. Other issues of concern are emergency preparedness and infrastructure such as roads, and I know we are also looking into energy feasibility studies. We also have to promote a community environment that encourages youth services," he says.

MLK

Continued from page 2

continue work on initiatives she began, just as she did years ago with her predecessors.

Christine Christian, co-president of GIAC's board of directors, had the final word. "You can't see GIAC without thinking of Marcia and you can't say Marcia without thinking of GIAC," she said with a wide smile. As the celebration drew to a close, she appealed to audience members to ask themselves what their contribution will be in the coming year and to "work together, be together, and love each other."

Home

Continued from page 9

and, as her ethereal friend astutely notes, he usually tends to pop into her mind when she's trying to figure something out. With her new awareness that it's impossible to recapture the past, except for in

your memories, Rachel picks up the phone. As she tells her Reunion Chair to "count me in" you'll find yourself applauding her willingness to move forward and reengage with her past, this time on her own terms.

Latest Living Wage Employers Named

The Tompkins County Workers' Center has announced that it now has 90 certified Living Wage Employers, with the addition of five such employers.

They are Sunny Days of Ithaca, 123 S. Cayuga Street, Ithaca; Court Street Chiropractic of Ithaca, 122 W. Court Street, Ithaca; St. Paul's United Methodist Church and St. Paul's Nursery School, 402 N. Aurora Street, Ithaca; Trumansburg Community Nursery School, P.O. Box 18, Trumansburg; and Weaver Wind Energy, 233 Cherry Street, Ithaca.

These businesses employ a total of 25 workers. This brings the total of workers, countywide and regionally, who are working for Living Wage Employers up to over 2,930 people.

The Workers' Center initiated the Living Wage Employer Certification Program in 2006 to publicly recognize and reward those employers who pay a living wage. Any employer in the private, public, and non-profit sectors is eligible to apply.

Go to www.tworkerscenter.org/community/certified-employers to find out which employers are Living Wage-Certified, as well as to download criteria and an application form.

Darwin Days 2015

Evolution in Your Backyard

Friday 2/6 Gallery Night, Tompkins County Public Library 5-8 pm	Sunday 2/8 Darwin's Dog Day, 11-2, Cayuga Nature Center Microcosmos, 3 pm, Cinemapolis	Monday 2/9 Panel - "Evolution in Your Backyard" 5:30 pm, Goldwin Smith Hall Room 142 (Cornell)
Tuesday 2/10 Science Cabaret, 7 pm, Lot 10 Cayuga St	Wed 2/11 Trivia Night Felicia's Atomic Lounge W State St	Thursday 2/12 Darwin's Birthday Bash, 5:30 -8:00 pm Museum of the Earth
	Friday 2/13 Lecture, Dr. Nelson Hairston, 5:30 pm, Goldwin Smith Hall, Room G64 (Cornell)	Saturday 2/14 Family Day, 10 am -2 pm, Museum of the Earth

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTION
With support from Cornell University and Derek and Leora Kaufman
PRIweb.org/DarwinDays

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