Social Justice Action
“What one does is what counts. Not what one had the intention of doing.” Pablo Picasso

Looking for A Guest Editor for February
Certainly YOU can write as well or better than I can!

UUCSW Service Project
Social Justice FAMILY Event –
When –Sunday February 2, 12:00 – 12:30 PM
Where – In our very own church kitchen.
What – Pack meals. We will be packing meals for people in a homeless shelter in Worcester. There will be jobs for all ages. We deliver 100 meals on Sunday and they are handed out the next two days.

People’s Lives, Pipelines and Fairness

Eversource Gas is proposing a pipeline through densely developed parts of Westborough and Southborough. Few details are known, but the potential threat to Westborough is notable and the unfairness to the people of Worcester is quite substantial. Worcester, the target market, is already plagued by over 800 gas leaks that threaten safety and the health of vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly. Eversource holds a public monopoly to sell and distribute gas in this area in return for acting in the public interest. However, it is choosing to expand its gas delivery system rather than accelerate fixing its leaky pipeline system. Does it seem to you that Eversource is being fair?

Please attend a public meeting sponsored by the Westborough Board of Selectmen with Eversource Gas on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 7 pm at Westborough Town Hall and bring your questions and comments.

Called the Worcester Feed Line Improvement Project, this 5-mile long gas pipeline will run from Southborough through Westborough buried under Flanders Rd, a bit of E. Main St, Steven Rd and Lyman St where it connects to an existing pipeline on Rt 9 servicing the City of Worcester. It will cost about $5 million per mile to build. It passes near Hastings School, two senior complexes, an assisted living facility, a skilled nursing facility, a hospital, multiple religious buildings plus many businesses and hundreds of residences and an MBTA rail station. You may not live or work nearby, but many of you pass through this area often.

The Merrimack Valley gas explosion in Lawrence, Andover and North Andover last year, which did $1.6 billion in damages and displaced over 8,000 people, taught us that gas pipelines are not problem-free.

At a time when the state is committed by law to reducing fossil fuel emissions by 80%, the decision to build brand new fossil fuel infrastructure requires close scrutiny. Such investments pose safety and health issues, will needlessly raise the cost of utility bills and will have to be abandoned as demand falls. Why burden our community with dangerous and expensive gas infrastructure when we should be shifting to clean energy and they should be fixing the leaky gas pipelines that threaten people’s health and safety everyday?

So come to this meeting to find out more and make up your mind about the fairness of this project. And bring your friends and neighbors too.

But wait there’s more! There will be a showing of the documentary “Under Pressure” followed by a discussion on Saturday, January 25, 2020 from 10 AM to 12 Noon in the Westborough Public Library.

Natural gas is the most used fuel for heating buildings and generating electricity in Massachusetts. But safety, health and climate impacts raise questions about future use of gas. “Under Pressure”, a documentary by students at the Four Rivers Charter School in Greenfield, MA, focuses on the Merrimack Valley gas pipeline explosions on September 13, 2018 and explores these health, safety and climate concerns. The film has special relevance to Westborough and Southborough where Eversource Energy is proposing to install a new 5.1 miles long, 16” gas pipeline. A discussion will follow this showing. All questions and points of view are welcome.

This issue is provided by John Metzger
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