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# Chief: We're not prepared for blast

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TEMPLE — Fire Chief George Clark spoke of his concerns with having a compressor station and gas pipeline so close to the Temple border.

In speaking about potential explosions resulting from the pipeline or compressor station, Clark said plainly, "I'll make this quick for you: We're not prepared. It's not like I like to say that as the fire chief, but we're not prepared."

Clark said that the main concerns for the town would be that the Temple Elementary School doubles as the town's emergency shelter, and is located within a half-mile of the proposed compressor station property. The town will have to implement a back up plan for evacuations, in preparation for a potential pipeline emergency.

The fact that Temple's police station is located in Greenville could also be an issue, said Clark, as the pipeline cuts across Senator Tobey Highway, the main route from Greenville to Temple. If there were an accident, Temple could be cut off from its police force.

Temple's Ad-hoc Pipeline Advisory Committee hosted the meeting to inform residents that Tennessee Gas Pipeline had announced June 1 that the company has a purchase agreement for land on 40 Skinny Cat Rd. off Temple Road, on the edge of the Temple border. The meeting was to inform the public of the siting, to take input from residents, and distribute information about its possible impacts.

The proposed compressor station is part of a proposal by Tennessee Gas Pipeline Inc's proposal to install a 430-mile long, 36-inch diameter pipeline, which is expected to carry between 1.2 and 2.2 billion cubic feet of Marcellus Shale natural gas per day to Dracut, Massachusetts. The line would travel through Greenville, Rindge, New Ipswich and Mason.

Sean Radcliffe has concerns about a compressor station being built less than half-mile from his home. Noise, lighting, vibration and pollution are high on his list. But his biggest concern is the ripple effect of installing a large industrial complex in a quiet, residential neighborhood.

"I think the biggest problem is what effect this is going to have on our area," said Radcliffe, during a meeting in Temple focused on the compressor station held Thursday. "If people want to stop living in that area, it's going to stop being residential. That will make room for things that don't mind living next to a compressor station — other industrial things." That could have a big impact on neighborhoods like Mountain View Road, where he lives, said Radcliffe.

New Ipswich residents were also in attendance at Thursday's meeting, including Select Board member Woody Meiszner. Meiszner drew criticism from one New Ipswich resident for leaving after the first hour of the meeting. The New Ipswich board only recently took a vote to oppose the proposed pipeline and compressor station, after Tennessee Gas Pipeline announced the siting of a compressor station in New Ipswich. Residents who are members of the pipeline opposition group New Ipswich Pipeline Resistance have urged the New Ipswich board to pick up the pace of their resistance efforts.

Meiszner defended his actions in an interview Monday, saying he had left at a point when a resident stood up to talk about the potential air pollutants from compressor stations, after attending more than half of the meeting. Meiszner said, though the New Ipswich board now officially opposes the pipeline, he still views some of the concerns about safety and health impacts to be inflammatory, with the actual risks being remote. While having plans for emergencies is prudent, the chance that an explosion, for example, will occur is remote, he said.

New Ipswich is moving forward with several initiatives to oppose the pipeline, said Meiszner, including taking applications for an ad-hoc advisory committee, which he hopes will work with other local committees, such as Temple or Mason's pipeline committee to get caught up on some of the issues.

The New Ipswich Planning Board is also working to draft ordinances to regulate industrial noise and lighting, to prepare for the possibility that the pipeline is approved and goes through, said Meiszner. Though he acknowledged that the approval of the pipeline and compressor station lies with the federal and state government, those agencies can and do take into account local ordinances when attaching conditions to approval of projects.

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