

October 08. 2015 9:23PM

## Kinder Morgan mulls pipeline route change

**By KIMBERLY HOUGHTON**  
**Union Leader Correspondent**

MERRIMACK — Officials with Kinder Morgan announced Thursday that they are exploring a modification to the proposed pipeline route that would bring the natural gas pipeline closer to the Everett Turnpike.

Barry Duff, project manager, said Kinder Morgan representatives met Thursday morning with officials from the Merrimack Premium Outlets and Fidelity Investments about some newly proposed amendments.

Still, Kinder Morgan employees stressed that this is a fluid process and will continue to change before it is finalized and presented to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for approval.

"I am happy that the businesses are being listened to," said Jody Vaillancourt, Town Council member. However, she maintained the community is at a huge disadvantage because new modifications are being introduced in the final hours.

While businesses have money and power, she stressed that individual homeowners without financial resources may be seriously impacted.

"I wouldn't believe what they say to me anyways," Vaillancourt said of Kinder Morgan representatives.

Other town councilors also criticized Kinder Morgan officials during their first public meeting with town councilors since the project surfaced.

"We went out of our way to play this thing right," said Dan Dwyer, town councilor, questioning why Kinder Morgan has not yet signed a survey agreement with the town of Merrimack. "It is frustrating," added Dwyer.

Nancy Harrington, Town Council chairman, said town officials were not given adequate time to review the most recent amendments to the proposed route prior to Thursday's meeting.

"We have been continuing to refine the route," said Allen Fore, vice president of public affairs at Kinder Morgan.

Duff emphasized that the original route, which traveled parallel with Continental Boulevard in Merrimack, was amended and moved further to the east to minimize impact to the nearby Thorntons Ferry School, and to avoid Pennichuck conservation land.

“I think this addresses a lot of concerns that we have seen,” said Duff, explaining Kinder Morgan is still in its pre-filing process, and is attempting to refine the proposed route to make it as disruptive as possible.

Duff echoed those sentiments, adding planners are also trying to avoid the Anheuser-Busch brewery in Merrimack because of its own on-site expansion project, which was recently delayed.

“We took all of these things into consideration in trying to find an alternative route,” he added.

Harrington said that although she hasn’t had time to study the new modifications, she said prior plans have impacted numerous local businesses that employ more than 10,000 people.

The route may also cross conservation property, negatively impact properties, decrease tax revenues and decline employment opportunities, according to Harrington.

“Obviously this is a massive change,” said councilor Tom Koenig. “We still have a serious problem that we are trying to understand and deal with.”

*khoughton@newstote.com*

- See more at: <http://www.unionleader.com/Kinder-Morgan-mulls-pipeline-route-change#sthash.lmpyGIgN.dpuf>