

# Burlington County holds natural gas pipeline meeting

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Posted By Ryan Ross

BURLINGTON CO. -

Residents shared their concerns over a proposed natural gas pipeline at a meeting of the Policy and Implementation Subcommittee of the Pinelands Commission Wednesday afternoon.

"No matter where a pipeline is constructed, it permanently destroys the natural infrastructure," said one resident.

"This is not just a decision for this time and this place, this is a decision impacting many generations to come," said Captain Joel Fogel of Water Watch International.

Residents not only voiced environmental concerns but believe that if a memorandum of agreement is adopted, it will open the door for more projects to take place in the area.

"The point I'm trying to make is once you open that Pandora's box, there is no Pinelands act left. This is not a death of a thousand cuts, this is a death of a thousand MOA's," said Jeff Tittel of the New Jersey Sierra Club.

Representatives from the Pinelands say the agreement is still in the process of being drafted. No decisions have been made and the Pinelands Commission will consider all of the terms of the proposed agreement once it is drafted while listening to the public along the way.

"Informed decision making is based upon the information we receive and the public is providing us with significant amounts of information and all of the info is being taken into account," said Pinelands Communications Officer, Paul Leakan.

Not everyone is against the pipeline.

Mayor Richard Palombo of Upper Township sees the pipeline as a way of converting the BL England plant to a cleaner source of power while providing the area with reliability.

"It is a service not only for reliability to provide electricity but it also a service to provide reliability for natural gas," said the Mayor.

As for the environment, the Mayor is confident all factors will be considered to minimize environmental impact, including placing the pipe under or near an already existing road, something that South Jersey Gas backed up in a statement saying:

"No one takes the safety of our natural gas system and the people and places we serve more seriously than we do. That of course includes the Pinelands."

The Pinelands Commission says no timetable currently exists for the project and the policy and implementation committee will meet once again next month.