



March 7, 2024

Mr. Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
12000 Government Parkway, Suite 530  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035

***Sent via email***

Dear Chairman McKay and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

The purpose of the letter is to advise the Board of Supervisors that the McLean Citizens Association shares the Board's concern about the risks posed by the Washington Gas company's plan to construct a high-pressure, large-scale transmission, natural gas pipeline through Pimmit Hills in Falls Church, Virginia. This type of transmission line is normally located along major arterial roadways and not through residential neighborhoods where it could pose a threat to nearby residences. Such areas are served by low-pressure, distribution lines that provide gas to the homes they pass.

In December 2023, the Board of Supervisors adopted a board matter requesting county staff to provide options by March 24, 2024 for amending the county zoning ordinance to regulate or prohibit the construction of high-pressure, natural gas transmission lines under residential streets. MCA supports this action and looks forward reviewing county staff's recommendations. Given the October 12, 2023 decision by the Fairfax County Circuit Court that transmission gas pipelines are not subject to the county zoning ordinance, as the ordinance currently exists, revisions in the code are required. However, the process of amending the zoning ordinance necessarily will take time.

Following the Court's decision, there is no longer any legal restraint to prevent Washington Gas from starting construction of the pipeline on April 1, 2024, weather permitting. For this reason, MCA urges that the Board take an additional step of requesting Washington Gas to delay the project until the Board's review of the zoning ordinance is complete. The Court's action revealed a regulatory gap; the Board needs adequate time to fill the void. The MCA urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors expeditiously act to determine whether it has jurisdiction over regulation of high-pressure natural gas transmission pipelines in residential neighborhoods, and, if it does, implement a revision of the zoning ordinance to implement such regulation. The potential risk to area residents requires that the Board take these actions.

Sincerely,

Linda Walsh, President  
McLean Citizen Association

cc: James Bierman, Dranesville District Supervisor  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
Ben Wiles, Dranesville District Supervisor's Chief of Staff