

Community Development Corporation

January 4, 2019

Dominion's community engagement process has created a divided community, broken long-term relationships and loss of trust. It failed to truly involve those local residents most affected by the compressor station, in fact, actively excluding them. A true public engagement process should have been initiated with all community residents by 2014. Agendas for all meetings were managed by Dominion. For example, the 2015 meetings only resulted in, as the Dominion report says, recommendations about issues such as color of paint for buildings. Issues residents found most pressing, health and safety, remain inadequately addressed. Resident Chad Oba's written comments explain the situation in detail.

The proposed economic development activities were not tailored to mitigate the economic losses of the most affected Union Hill residents, landowners who do not have easements but whose property value has already declined due to proximity with the compressor station (within a mile of the facility) so will be exposed to the highest economic, pollution, health, and safety risks. Rural land does not tend to change hands often and is regularly passed through families. There is little research data to confirm it, but discussions with local people tend to focus on the fact that since the area is so unpopulated, and there are many pieces of land available, no one would risk buying land near pipeline infrastructure now. The one property that has been sold near Union Hill was quickly moved at a greatly lower price so the owners could leave after discovering that the pipeline was coming. An explosion along the Transco line in nearby Appomattox county that destroyed several homes several years ago is remembered by many in the county and safety is a major concern of residents. Landowners understand that ACP is set up as an LLC to protect Dominion Energy in case of a disaster. No bond, insurance policy or other protective arrangement for landowners in case of loss is required of ACP.

The mitigation Dominion has agreed to provide the Union Hill community is the result of Dominion hiring Dr. Basil Gooden to generate support for the compressor station project. Dr. Gooden owns family land crossed by Transco pipelines on which he raises cattle. Like many affected landowners, he currently lives outside of Buckingham county and it is unclear whether he ultimately plans to return to the property to live full time.

Documents indicate that Dr. Gooden is the chair of the community development corporation (CDC) Greater Union Hill Community Development Corporation. No other leaders are identified, and since this package was negotiated without involvement of those who have been actively expressing concerns, it can be assumed that these community members will continue to be excluded from the process and community division will grow. The Dominion report appears to attempt to justify this exclusion, stating that at the September 17, 2018 meeting some participants complained about protesting and lack of focus on community improvement. It should be noted that no protesting occurred at these meetings and that affected participants were simply seeking to get all participants to understand their concerns, and what they had learned through the years of the process. The report does not include this information but these most affected residents were actively excluded from development of this proposal and the issues they raised are not addressed. On September 15, 2018 Dr. Gooden explained to Kenda Hanuman that those opposed to the project “weren’t welcome.” Instead, Dominion and selected community members privately developed the proposal that is presented and division of the community festers.

Specific concerns about the CDC include:

- 1) Since Dominion has appointed the chair, it appears that Dominion intends to control this organization. Community members were shocked to hear after the May 24, 2018 meeting for supporters only that Dominion’s Emmet Toms told those assembled that without Dominion tax money Buckingham would not have the new county administration building or several new schools, inferring that the county is indebted to Dominion already.
- 2) No criteria for selection of board members ensure that those most affected and actively living in the community full time will be represented. Board members select other board members, so it is likely that a close circle will be tapped and the majority of the community will be excluded. Community division has grown in recent months and long term relationships are broken as a result of this project. Many of those heavily involved in creating this proposal do not actually live in the community. They may intend to return at some point, but can people manage an organization like this from multiple states?
- 3) Only standard, boilerplate language is used to describe the CDC. No bylaws or procedures ensure that the entire community is represented or

that decisions about use of the resources will address needs of most affected residents.

- 4) There are no criteria for who will be able to access the economic development resources, no limitation or priority to those living in the community.
- 5) The proposal seems to indicate that the community center will be operated with the donated Dominion money. However, it does not appear sufficient. There is no information about how the proposed community center will be managed, who will be responsible for daily oversight, who will be eligible to use the facilities, and no assurance that the actual community needs will be addressed.
- 6) There is no reference to assistance with individual resident's health challenges created or exacerbated by the compressor station and no provision to purchase sufficiently precise home air quality monitors.
- 7) There are no guarantees that the CDC will actually become active. It could be dissolved as easily as it was created, with no public involvement.
- 8) Funding for paid emergency staff is provided to Buckingham county for only four years; the compressor station will be present in the community for the better part of the coming century, at least.

Support

None of the most affected residents of Union Hill is included among the signors of support letters provided by Dominion. Those living full time within one-half to one mile of the compressor station, who do not own alternative property, are not represented and nothing in this package includes them or requires that the needs of those most affected by the compressor station are met. These most affected landowners have been active through the processes of the last years but most signors have not participated. The list of community members is lacking signatures of the African Americans living closest to the proposed compressor station: Ella Rose, William and Mary Rose, Berkeley Laury, Marie Gillespie, and the Harpers. A donation of \$5.1 M and undocumented promises of jobs have incentivized some who know very little of what's at stake or who stand to gain in other ways. For example, it seems the location for the community center is on Craig White's property. He lives in Maryland.

While the Friends of Buckingham meetings (over 200 during the past four years) are all announced and public, most of the decisions around this package were made in private meetings. Dominion excused this, saying it worked with those who wanted to get something for the community since this project is inevitable, and that it could not accomplish anything where opposing individuals were present. The numbers of supporters is misleading. It appears that some signors have duplicate signatures included. Some used family home addresses but actually live outside Buckingham county. Thus, Dominion found supporters but they are not among the most affected residents. The concerns of the most affected residents remain unaddressed and this process orchestrated by Dominion has split the community.

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