

# Residents concerned about natural gas pipeline

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(Photo: Marika Lee/ The Community Press)

BLUE ASH – Residents are expressing their concerns about a natural gas pipeline possibly coming through the community—worried about the scale of the project and possible aesthetic consequences.

"I strongly oppose the central corridor pipeline extension, not just because one proposed route runs right behind my house and street but also because I don't think a pipeline of this industrial size should be routed anywhere near residential areas," Bluewing Terrace resident Lin Lyon said.

About 40 Blue Ash residents attended the meeting Councilman Marc Sirkin hosted about Duke Energy's natural gas pipeline extension project.

Duke is extending its natural gas pipeline to ensure better gas services in Hamilton County and reduce dependencies on gas transmission lines from Northern Kentucky.

"This is to get gas down from the Lebanon area into the northern suburbs of Cincinnati. This project started based on a study Duke did in 2015, which was a 20-year outlook of our gas system. There were five major projects. This is the first one," project manager James Olberding said.

About 12 miles of 30-inch pipe will be installed about four feet underground. The pipe will either be under roadways or covered with soil after it is installed.

Olberding said Duke considered more than 200 routes for the pipeline and has narrowed it to three. One of the routes goes through Blue Ash. The route could either go down Plainfield Road, directly in front of UC Blue Ash, or behind the campus through the wooded area between the back parking lot and Bluewing Terrace.

"That creates a visual nightmare for the residents because now what we are looking at in what used to be private backyards would be a parking lot. We considered the nice privacy in the backyard when we moved here," Bluewing Terrace resident Terry Huge said.

He said he is opposed to the other route as well because of its proximity to Blue Ash Elementary School and Blue Ash KinderCare.

Steve Lane, an environmental specialist for the project, said Duke looks at numerous factors to determine the routes.

"We looked at a variety of factors, socioeconomic being one of the big ones. We also looked at residences in 100 and 1,000 feet. We looked at elements like road crossings, existing utilities, wood lots that would have to be cleared. It is a balance of looking at the socioeconomic factors, the environmental factors and the engineering factors," Lane said.

Bluewing Terrace resident Elizabeth Rueve-Miller said she is concerned about the size of the equipment used to construct the pipelines and how close it would have to be to homes on Bluewing Terrace.

"I do not think this kind of transmission line belongs in residential communities, whether you are talking about my neighborhood or someone else's," she said.

The decision on the routes will be made by the Ohio Power Siting Board, which is responsible for reviewing and approving plans for construction of new energy infrastructure in Ohio.

"Both routes are very challenging. One will be picked as a main and one as an alternate. The power board will tell us which ones they prefer us to build," Olberding said.

Designs for the project are slated for completion in spring 2017, with construction beginning in the summer of that year and finishing in fall 2018.

Residents expressed concerns about ground slippage and gas leaks.

"Duke claims it will have many safety measures in place, in line with government regulations, but these measures may not be enough. We are skeptical about the number of safeguards and amount of oversight that will go into this unprecedented project by Duke Energy," resident Glen Rosen said.

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Lane said Duke has provisions for slippage and gas leaks. Barrier fences will be built around where the pipeline will be, if the route between UC Blue Ash and Bluewing Terrace is chosen.

"We have a monitoring department so if there is a change in pressure they will start shutting down the systems. If it is more than a pinhole, it will show up in our system," Olberding said. He added the pipeline will be made with newer technology and better materials than ones that have had well-known leaks or explosions.

Sirkin and the representatives from Duke said residents who are concerned about the pipeline being in or near their homes should contact the Ohio Power Siting Board.

"We encourage you to contact the power siting board, become involved in the process and become a voice. Anything you can provide the power siting board will be weighed. You simply stating that you don't want it there is of interest," Lane said.

Olberding said each route goes through residential, industrial and commercial properties and further down the line Duke will contact all of them. Sirkin and the residents of Bluewing Terrace were the first to meet with Duke about the project.

"While none of us want this project in our backyards, we also don't want to see it passed along to another residential neighborhood or sitting in front of schools and day care centers," resident Jared Newman said.

Concerns about the project were also raised in Sycamore Township.

Board of Trustees President Tom Weidman said that the only benefit to Sycamore Township coming from the three proposals on the table is extra access to natural gas.

Administrator Greg Bickford said the pipeline project will "tear" through the township. One proposal would go through Kenwood Towne Center. Olberding said if that route is chosen Duke would try to avoid doing construction during busy shopping seasons, such as Christmas.

Bickford, working with a resident and engineer Geoff Grant, will prepare a letter for the Sycamore trustees to review and sign in early May. Once approved the letter will be sent to the Ohio Power Siting Board.

Sheila Vilvens contributed to this report.

Want to know more about what is happening in Blue Ash? Follow Marika Lee on Twitter: [@ReporterMarika](https://twitter.com/ReporterMarika) (<https://twitter.com/ReporterMarika>)

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Through Duke Energy: <https://www.duke-energy.com/ohio/natural-gas/central-corridor.asp> (<https://www.duke-energy.com/ohio/natural-gas/central-corridor.asp>)

Through Ohio Power Siting Board: [opsb.ohio.gov/opsb/](http://www.opsb.ohio.gov/opsb/) (<http://www.opsb.ohio.gov/opsb/>), search using case number 16-253-GA-BTX

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			ODOT invites the contractor community and general public to this meeting, where we will: Review findings of the 2015-16 Disparity Study; and review and invite public comment on our proposed DBE Goal Methodology for 2017-19. <b>CLICK THIS AD FOR DATES AND LOCATIONS</b>

Table 1

Inflow	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	
Ohio						
Indiana	6895	6895	6895	6895	6895	6895
Kentucky	4164	4164	4164	4164	4164	4164
Michigan	100	100	100	100	100	100
Pennsylvania	890	465	465	465	465	465
West Virginia	1635	1635	1635	1635	1635	1635
Ohio Total	13,684	13,259	13,259	13,259	13,259	13,259
Outflow						
Ohio						
Indiana	2,093	468	468	468	468	468
Kentucky	769	219	219	219	219	219
Michigan	1,892	1,892	1,892	1,892	1,892	1,892
Pennsylvania	2,142	2,142	2,142	2,142	2,142	2,142
West Virginia	3,355	3,355	3,355	3,355	3,355	3,205
Ohio Total	10,251	8,076	8,076	8,076	8,076	7,926

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