

Company plans to press ahead with pipeline

By **JEFFREY SHINN**
Special to The Times

BORDENTOWN TOWNSHIP - Williams' Transco said yesterday it planned to go ahead with its application to the Federal Energy Commission to extend its pipeline through the township, despite the municipality's requests for a delay.

"We are expecting to file the application with FERC today," Transco spokeswoman Gina Johnson said yesterday.

Johnson noted that the company had become aware only Tuesday of a letter from the township committee stating a list of issues and concerns and said the company is willing to review all points.

She said Williams' Transco had sent an advance copy of its FERC application to the township committee, along with an offer to meet and openly discuss their concerns, but the committee had not yet taken up the offer.

Williams' Transco, which operates a natural gas pipeline system between the Texas Gulf Coast and New York City, plans to build a 3.5-mile pipeline through Bordentown and Mansfield townships. Company officials have said the new section would connect sections of an existing 36-inch pipeline to meet regional service demands.

Bordentown Township officials have raised concerns about the pipeline expansion's effect on residents, the municipality's open space program and future commercial growth as well as construction noise, safety and property values.

Last week, the township committee said it planned to send a letter to Transco expressing frustration at the lack of response to detailed information it requested, as well as a letter to FERC asking that the company not be permitted to make the filing yesterday.

Members of the committee say they are still frustrated and are still waiting for sufficient pipe route mapping along with answers to environmental and community concerns.

"We sent them an itemized list but most of our issues weren't even addressed," said Mayor Gerald Boyer. "We still don't feel comfortable with them moving forward on anything. The committee doesn't want to simply roll over and submit to a large company."

FERC has received a list of concerns from township committee members. It is scheduled to accept written comments on the pipeline expansion project until Aug. 27.

If the application process goes as they hope, Transco officials would like to begin construction on the project in the first quarter of 2005.