

**“The People vs. The Pipeline” –
Sunday, November 12, 2023, 6:30 Community Bible Church, 105 Main Street**

Anthropologist Margaret Mead once said “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

It is in keeping with her spirit that the Northfield Oral History Project presents a multi-media production we call “The People vs. The Pipeline”, the story of the diverse strategies and actions that took place between 2014 and 2016, as told by the participants in their own words, and helped stop the Northeast Direct (NED) fracked gas pipeline proposed by the Kinder Morgan company to traverse Massachusetts through Berkshire and Franklin counties and beyond, siting compressor stations to push the gas on its way to export. One of those stations was planned for Northfield.

The production features the voices of local citizens, elected officials and tribal representatives, and the efforts by municipalities--even our former Attorney General—sharing research on demand for gas, on Indigenous ceremonial stone structures and sacred sites in the path of the construction and the deleterious effects of toxic “blow downs” from compressor stations on the health of our children and seniors. Oral testimonies are interspersed with photographs and video of some of the public hearings, demonstrations, protests, public multi-day walks and other activities undertaken to highlight the coming threat to communities along the path to uncover the false claims about the need. Music provided by Carrie and Michael Kline, consultants to the Oral History Project, musicians and founders of “Talking Across the Lines.” Document compilation and editing by Cate Woolner, Stephen Stoia and Joan Stoia with production assistance by Robbie Leppzer, Bernardston-Northfield Community Media (BNCTV) and Greenfield Community Television (GCTV). Our all-volunteer cast includes: Court Dorsey, William Spademan, Steve Stoia, Mary Johnson, Steven Botkin, Joan Levy and Cate Woolner with Shirley Keech as former Attorney General Maura Healey.

Using actual testimonies, music and a little bit of humor, the story of the pipeline brings the 350th Anniversary toward its close with a contemporary event that confronted Northfield and its neighbors in the past decade. It is funded by a matching grant from the Grassroots Fund of New England. Support for the Oral History Project was provided by an allocation obtained by Senator Jo Comerford’s Office. We hope that the lessons learned will be of use to other small communities facing similar challenges in the future. We hope you enjoy it!