



**Community Liaison Committee for  
Higgins Mountain II Wind Farm Project**

**MEETING NOTES**

May 12th, 2020 - 6.30pm - 8.00pm

Video Call - Zoom

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**In attendance:**

CLC Chair: Garfield Moffatt

CLC Members: Gregor Wilson, Mike Eddy, Councillor Barbara Palmer and Adrian Dobson, Karen Henderson, Helen Browne (Verterra)

Higgins Partnership: Graham Findlay (3G Energy), Dan Eaton (Elemental Energy), Paul Pynn (Katalyst Energy)

Regrets/Absent: Bob Maclean

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**Action items:**

- **All:** Consider the Mission statement presented and send any feedback to Garfield.
  - **Gregor:** To provide any details of the provincial loan to Northern Timber.
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**1. Welcome**

**2. Review of Agenda**

- Agenda was reviewed and approved.

**3. Approval of Notes from November 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting and Update on Actions**

- Two comments made on notes from previous agenda:
  - Councillor Tom Taggart was missing from the list of attendees.
  - Gregor Wilson asked that the sentence regarding the lack of studies to support his argument that wind farms have a negative impact on tourism be removed.

Both of these items will be changed and revised notes will be published.

- Gregor's comment led to a discussion on tourism and it was noted that work would be done as part of the Socio-Economic section of the Environmental Assessment to study the impact on tourism.

#### **4. Project Update**

- Paul Pynn confirmed that there are no new activities on the project and that the only work currently being conducted is the community consultation.
- There is talk of a new procurement process coming up to supply the Federal Buildings with 100% renewable energy, but the timelines are not yet known.
- Garfield asked a general question regarding the procurement processes in other Canadian jurisdictions. Paul provided an overview:
  - Wind and Solar projects are being built in AB and SK.
  - There is some small wind projects going forward in NB.
  - There is the possibility of some small wind and solar projects in ON as well as a lot of work on battery storage.
- Councillor Tom Taggart asked about large scale solar in NS. The Higgins Mountain Partnership haven't heard much about this. Helen Browne had recently met with NSPI to discuss the Town of Bridgewater's plans for a solar project and reported that NSPI were concerned about the higher cost of solar compared to other forms of energy generation.
- Garfield asked if there were any concerns or problems financing projects given the global pandemic. Paul said that there was an initial slow down but confidence has now returned.
- Gregor asked that the developers confirm that they are no longer considering exporting energy from the Higgins Mountain site if the Atlantic Link project does not proceed. Paul responded that the developers are open to all opportunities to sell energy from the Higgins site depending on what, if any procurement process occurs in the province.

#### **5. Community Update**

- Graham asked if anyone knew the status of Northern Timber. Councillor Tom Taggart said that Northern Pulp were going through a new permitting process. Gregor talked about a Provincial loan to Northern Pulp that has not been paid back. Paul asked for details.
- Tom said that he doesn't see NSPI making any larger wind power projects purchases in the near future.

6. **CLC Mission** – The group discussed the purpose of the CLC and their role as a member of it. In particular, answering the following two questions.

- What is your role on the CLC?
- Create a mission statement for the group

Garfield had prepared a draft mission statement which is attached to these notes.

- Councillor Tom Taggart said that the CLC is important and that it is great to have early contact and outreach from the development team. He acknowledged that there is not much information at the moment but it's good to get the CLC set up.
- Karen said that, while Tom and Barb are official representatives through their position as Councillors, it is important to recognise that the other members are volunteers and not elected. It is also important to note that by being a member of the CLC she does not claim to be representative nor responsible for opinions within the community.
- Councillor Tom Taggart asked that something be added to the statement with regards to community benefit. He also asked if the Higgins Mountain Partnership plan to include a community fund as part of the project. Paul confirmed that the developers intend to establish a community fund in addition to other benefits that the project would bring to the local area.
- Mike suggested that the mission should be based around the answers to the questions 'what do we do?' and 'what do we do it for?'.
- Most CLC members felt that the draft that Garfield presented was a good start.
- **Discussion on existing 3 turbines:** Discussion turned to the status of the existing three turbines. Paul confirmed that status of decommissioning or repairing will be dependent on terms of the power purchase agreement.

7. **Historical layout review and new constraints – presented by Graham Findlay.**

- Graham presented the attached powerpoint to the group. It described the land available to develop a wind farm and the constraints on where turbines might be placed.
- Garfield asked if all turbines could be placed west of the transmission line that runs through the site. Graham said that there would not be enough room left for the turbines if only that portion of the property were used.
- Garfield asked if landowners to the west had been approached and if the Higgins Mountain Wind Farm Partnership would consider involving these landowners in the project. Graham acknowledged that this would be a good thing to expand the site and will consider approaching the additional landowners.

- The group asked why they could not see the wind turbine layout? The developers explained that because the project is in such an early state, the type and size of turbine have not been selected therefore any layout would be very inaccurate.

**8. Next CLC meeting date and proposed agenda**

- The Zoom call worked well for the majority of attendees although a few CLC members had trouble with audio and internet connection. It was agreed that the next meeting would be in July using a similar format.
- All agreed that the by-laws for wind energy in Colchester and Cumberland County should be an agenda item for the next meeting. The CLC will invite Nelson Bezanson, Municipal Planner for Cumberland to attend the meeting and present by-laws for Cumberland County. Tom Taggart was involved in the creation of the Colchester County by-laws and will discuss with staff to see who would be best placed to present by-laws for Colchester county.

**9. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8.25pm

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**List of Potential Future Agenda Items/Guest Speakers**

Environmental Assessment:

- Invite a representative from Department of Environment to explain the EA process

Land:

- Invite the current landowners, Northern Pulp as guests
- Discuss other users and uses of the land in general i.e. what future uses are allowed alongside wind turbines, clear cutting, recreational activities etc.
- Mitigation of damage to sensitive species during construction of a wind farm

County By-laws

- Invite Nelson Bezanson from County of Cumberland to talk about county by-laws for wind turbines.

Wind Turbine Insurance:

- Understand developer/county/landowner/insurance liabilities and limitations for various scenarios.

Community Consultation:

- CLC role should circumstance change i.e. change of ownership, project is built and becomes operational
- Community consultation plan as the project evolves.

- Recommendation from the CLC on how to best contact community members.