



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

MEETING NOTES

March 30th, 2019 - 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Video Call - Zoom

In attendance:

CLC Chair: Garfield Moffatt

CLC Members: Gregor Wilson, Mike Eddy, Adrian Dobson, Councillor Tom Taggart

Higgins Mountain Wind Farm LP: Graham Findlay, Paul Pynn , Will Patterson , Helen Browne (Verterra)

Regrets/Absent: Councillor Kathy Redmond

Action items:

- **CLC:** Send thank you notes to Karen and Bob for their contribution to the CLC.
 - **Development Team:** Reach out to Folly Lake Landowners Association and consult with the group.
 - **Paul:** Contact procurement administrator to understand likely size of 2021 RFP.
 - **Outstanding actions - Helen:** Send details of Bird Radar.
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- **Welcome**
- **Review of Agenda**
 - A request was made by the develop team to change to agenda and discuss functioning and governance of the CLC at the start of the meeting. Agreed.
- **Review and Approval of Notes from December 1st, 2020 Meeting and Update on Actions**
 - Outstanding action for Helen to send details of Bird Radar to the CLC.
 - No other comments.

- **Governance and functioning of the CLC**

- **Resignations:** Karen Henderson and Bob MacLean resigned from the CLC.

The group discussed the resignations and wanted to thank both CLC members for their contribution.

- **General discussion on CLC:** Paul led a general discussion about the functioning of the CLC and asked for feedback on how it could be improved. He felt that, at this time, the CLC is not as productive as it could be and that some members are using the information provided by the development team simply as a means to prevent the project from moving ahead rather than participating in a genuine two-way dialogue between the developer and community representatives. Paul shared his personal view that this dynamic has resulted in a reluctance of the development team to share some detailed information with the CLC. Further, information that has been discussed at the CLC does not appear to have been conveyed to communities in the area in any consistent and unbiased way. A very open and honest conversation ensued. CLC members felt that the CLC's progress was hindered as a result of the development team not providing specifics of proposed turbine locations. They pointed out that they have been asking for this information since the CLC was first formed. Paul described the difficulty in providing turbine locations at this point because the size of the anticipated procurement (and therefore number of wind turbines) is not yet known.

Tom expressed his opinion that the project does not necessarily require community approval, it is the responsibility of the development team to have a relationship with the community and that both sides need to be prepared to compromise on certain aspects of the project. In his personal view, visual impact is the biggest concern, and the development team will need to work with the community to address this as best they can.

The group discussed whether they should dissolve the CLC or refrain from meeting until a turbine layout was available. They all agreed that the CLC should continue as much information has been shared and discussed to date (with the exception of turbine layout) and this would be expected to continue in the coming months.

- **CLC self-assessment survey:** the results of the CLC self-assessment survey was shared with the CLC. Only four responses were received and these were discussed as part of the general discussion described above.
- **New members:** the group discussed how to recruit new CLC members. The basis for choosing new members should be on representation of the different geographical areas surrounding the project. Wentworth area should have representation now that Karen and Bob have resigned. Garfield has a few contacts that he will reach out to and the CLC will also ask Kathy for ideas. Garfield suggested that new members should not have a financial interest in the project.
- **Guests:** Guests such as representative from KMKNO are welcome to attend the CLC.
- **Chair:** The group voted in favour of Garfield continuing as Chair. The

development team thanked him for his contribution.

- **Terms of Reference:** No changes are required.

- **Project Update**
 - **Procurement:** The procurement process has been launched. Slides from a stakeholder webinar, describing the process were shared with the CLC prior to the meeting. The proposed timeframe is for an RFP by end of summer 2021 with winning project announced in the Fall. The total capacity of the RFP i.e. number of MWs, has not yet been announced. This influences the turbine layout. Paul said that he would contact the procurement administrator to attempt to get an indication on the potential size.
 - **Environmental studies:** Will provided an update. Spring breeding bird and migration surveys have starting again. Noise modelling is scheduled for the end of June. The project description has been submitted to NS Department of Environment and a person has been assigned to the project from that department.
 - **Preliminary turbine layout:** Will said that a preliminary turbine layout for the Environmental Assessment will be made in the next few months. This is required for the noise modelling work. Note: In order to study the maximum possible environmental impact, the layout for the Environmental Assessment will be for a 150MW project which represents the full potential using the available land. The developers expect the upcoming procurement to be less than 150MW therefore the final number of turbines and t layout will be smaller depending on the size of the RFP and results of environmental studies.
 - **Public consultation:** Will shared the preliminary plan for wider public consultation. The development group were thinking of holding an initial virtual meeting in the spring followed by an in person meeting (COVID restrictions permitting) later in the summer with more specific project details including turbine layout. CLC members discussed the idea that an initial virtual meeting may do more harm than good if there are no specific details on the turbine layout and project scale. The development team acknowledged the CLC members comments and will reconsider their plans.
 - **Three existing turbines:** Paul provided an update. He said that they are working on a plan to repair the turbines.). They have sourced new parts that will be installed in spring/summer when the weather is better. If this does not happen, they will be removed.
 - **Questions and comments:**
 - Tom asked what NSPI’s involvement is in the procurement process and who will be off taking the power. Paul responded that the Federal Government will offset it’s building energy requirements with renewable energy from this procurement. and that other groups including the Province, Municipalities, large industrial users and Universities are currently being asked if they would also want to be part of the program. NSPI’s role is not yet fully defined but they will act as the intermediary between the independent power producers and the organisations that

- will be off taking the power.
 - Garfield asked what is to stop other renewable energy generation owners bidding in the upcoming procurement (such as Nalcor). Paul responded that he is unsure but feels the likely mix of energy supplied in NS in the long term will be a combination of different renewable energy sources.
 - All CLC members said that holding a public consultation event without sharing specific details on turbine layout would not be productive.. See notes on layout above.
 - Tom suggested that the development team hold their public consultation event at the Wentworth Rec Centre. He thought that an open house format with information posters on easels and EA experts on hand works well.
 - Adrian pointed out that the powerlines for the three existing turbines are down after the last ice storm and Paul acknowledged that this will be part of the repairs.
- **Community Update**
 - A letter was shared from Folly Lake Landowners Association. The authors are concerned that local landowners are not being consulted. The development team was unaware of the existence of the Folly Lake Landowners Association and will contact the group directly and consult with them.
 - Adrian pointed out that moving the project west would place it closer to Westchester Station and that the group should consider residents and landowners there.
 - **Next CLC meeting date and proposed agenda**
 - Next meeting is proposed for late April/early May. Suggested items for the agenda included another Q&A session on environmental surveys from Shawn at Strum.
 - **Adjournment**
 - The meeting was adjourned at 7.28pm.

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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 – Planners presented, follow up required.

- 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.