



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

MEETING NOTES

July 7th, 2021, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM AST
Video Call – Zoom

In attendance:

CLC Chair: Garfield Moffatt

CLC Members: Rene LeClerc, Mike Eddy, Gregor Wilson, Mary Beth Bowie, Adrian Dobson

Higgins Mountain Wind Farm LP: Graham Findlay, Paul Pynn, Dan Eaton, Maryam Baksh

- **Welcome and Introductions**
- **Review of Agenda**
 - Agenda was reviewed and approved.
- **Review and Approval of Notes from Meeting on May 19th, 2021**
- **Project Update – Dan**
 - RFP will be delayed until late in the fall. Expecting to see a draft of the RFP documents in late July/early September.
 - Developers reached out to Northern Pulp to invite them to a meeting. No response from Northern Pulp yet/
 - Developers explained that consultation with various stakeholders is ongoing including KMKNO, local community groups etc.
 - Discussions with NSPI about interconnection of the wind farm to the grid are ongoing.
 - Developers also confirmed that although a draft turbine layout would be

presented at this meeting, the final layout is still in flux as field data and other input from stakeholders result in an iterative layout process.

- The CLC confirmed that Natural Forces is holding a community meeting at the Fire Hall on July 20th.
- 3 existing turbines at Higgins Mountain
 - Paul confirmed that the plan is to install new parts to refurbish the turbines next spring. Was originally planning for this fall, but parts availability and shipping delays means it needs to be pushed to spring.
- **Environmental Update** – Maryam
 - Spring breeding bird studies are complete.
 - Strum is working on reports related to field studies to date.
 - Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge Study has been commissioned for the site. Some delay in meetings with Elders due to COVID concerns.
 - Gregor offered to help Strum on the MEKS/Archaeological Studies if needed.
 - Mike noted that in his experience, First Nation consultation could take much longer than 3 months.
 - Garfield asked when Strum would be invited to another CLC meeting.
 - Generally, consensus is that the CLC is very interested in progress of environmental studies in the area.
 - Maryam distributed answers to various EA related written questions that the committee had previously submitted to Strum.
 - There was discussion about the idea of Shawn from Strum hosting a separate meeting with the CLC for them to ask further questions once they've digested the Q&A document.
 - Adrian noticed that there is a trailer still on Stevens Mountain. The developers confirmed that this is not Strum's. Paul noted this could be a LIDAR unit.
 - Socioeconomic assessment – Gregor asked about timing for when developers would be reaching out to big companies and employers in the area. Paul noted that this hasn't been started substantially yet but would be soon on Strum's advice.
- **Layout** – Graham
 - Graham presented and reviewed the draft layout. Explained the process of arriving at draft locations based on a constraints analysis considering setbacks from receptors, energy production levels and environmental constraints including wetlands, roads, watercourses, botany, roads, and slopes. This is an iterative process that is updated as new data and constraints become available.

The presentation showed how the various constraints had been incorporated into the draft layout.

- Strum will be doing further field verification of constraints this summer.
- Garfield asked if constraints consider community concerns. Graham responded yes, and that the proposed layout used setback limits beyond regulatory requirements.
- Garfield asked about proposed wind turbine size. Paul responded that a 110 m hub height was common in current turbine offerings with approximately 150-160 m rotor diameter, therefore approximately 190-200, m height total was possible.
- Garfield requested some reference to existing turbines in the province. Paul responded that for reference, the turbines in the Amherst wind farm are approximately 160 m from ground to tip.
- Garfield asked if we have any data on cumulative noise in mountain settings for 5-6 MW turbines. Graham responded that there are existing sound emission curves for each turbine which will be combined in the modelling with the effects from the topographic and ground cover specifications of the surrounding environment. The modelling will then produce a noise level specific to each receptor.
 - Garfield followed up asking how we could prevent the possibility of a technically incorrect noise assessment. Graham noted that site specific topography and landcover variations are considered in the study. Dan added that wind farm noise studies are typically quite conservative and well validated.
- Garfield noted that closest receptors are on HWY 4 near Folly Lake.
- Paul confirmed that existing roads on site were used as much as possible in the current layout.
- Gregor asked if the lake effect and small valleys amplifying sound is this considered. Graham responded that these are considered.
- Garfield asked about wind farm capacity of 150 MW as shown on the layout, and if there a possibility that the wind farm could be 200 MW. Developers responded that the environmental assessment (EA) is based on 150 MW, therefore 200 MW is not proposed.
 - Graham mentioned that some of the turbines on the west side of the site would require longer transmission lines and roads therefore may not be optimal. Garfield noted that these turbines are farthest from residents along the Valley Road.
 - Dan noted that ~5 MW turbines are currently being installed in Alberta.
 - Garfield asked about details of navigation lighting on the wind farm. Graham responded that typically, navigation lights are required on the perimeter of the wind farm, not all turbines. Also, lights are typically red, not white, to minimize impact. Garfield requested that Strum take a look

at the effect of the light tower from Stevens Mountain in low light conditions.

- Developers confirmed that Strum will be doing a radio/electromagnetic study for the wind farm.
- Both Gregor and Rene requested a higher resolution layout in subsequent drafts.
- Paul noted that it is the intention of the developer to collect opinions from CLC or community meetings as to which viewpoint locations should be assessed during the visual assessment component of the EA work.
- Garfield asked about timing of subsequent layout drafts. Graham noted that it is an iterative process and more close-to-final drafts will be created closer to bid time.
- Mike voiced his concern that there has been a strong focus on visual impact at past CLC meetings. As one of the closest residents to the proposed wind farm, he is personally less concerned about visual impact and would like to focus more on environmental impacts, potential impacts on recreational use of the area, noise, etc.
 - Gregor and Garfield noted that they believe visual impact is important.
- **Community Meeting Scheduling**
 - Paul noted that the developers have been discussing possible dates for a community meeting. Thinking about July as a first introductory meeting. Also noted that the plan is to hold more than one community meeting. The CLC discussed possible dates and approaches to ensure good participation. Some concern about attendance in July. Also discussed whether in person or virtual meeting would make most sense. Agreed to circle back with the CLC to confirm approach and timing.
- **Next CLC Meeting Date and Proposed Agenda**
 - Next meeting is proposed for August
 - Next meeting focused on Strum commenting on the distributed Q&A spreadsheet, present an environmental assessment overview, and be present for the CLC to ask any additional to the questions related to the EA.
 - Maryam will send a Doodle poll to confirm everyone's availability.
- **Adjournment**
 - The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM AST.