



June 9, 2015

## **South Branch Wind Farm Project Community Liaison Committee (CLC) – Meeting Minutes – Meeting #3**

### **Time and Place**

Thursday May 28, 2015

7:00pm to 9:00pm

Dixon's Corners Community Centre  
10951 Cook Road, County Road 18,  
Brinston ON, K0E 1C0

### **Invited**

Current CLC members/volunteers, EDP Renewables (EDP) representatives, and all interested members of the community

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Meeting purpose, goals and agreements
3. Project update
4. Community Liaison Committee (CLC) review of depositions
5. Q&A/Open discussion

### **Attendees**

Total number of community members in attendance: **5**

Total number of agency members in attendance: **1** (Terri Forrester, MOECC)

### **CLC members present:**

- Francois Lauzon (CLC Chair) from Stantec Consulting Ltd.
- Kimberly Wenborn (CLC meeting support) from Stantec Consulting Ltd.
- Bill Byker (CLC volunteer)
- Pieter Biemond (CLC volunteer)
- Chris Bazinet (CLC volunteer)

### **CLC Members regrets:**

- Greg Vant Foort (CLC Volunteer)

### **Discussion**

1. **Welcome and Introductions (CLC Chair).** The meeting was officially opened at 7:07 pm by Francois Lauzon (CLC Chair) with general introductions of CLC members Mr. Bill Byker, Mr.

Pieter Biemond, Mr. Chris Bazinet, as well as Ms. Kim Wenborn from Stantec to assist. EDP staff (Erika Nelson, Ken Little, Ryan O'Conner, and Nathan Roscoe) were also introduced.

2. **Meeting purpose, goals, and agreements (CLC Chair).** The purpose of the CLC was explained in the context of the CLC Terms of Reference (ToR) and of the Ontario Renewable Energy Act (REA) Approval. The CLC acts as a mechanism for community members to communicate and voice concerns or questions in a community forum and to seek potential resolution of issues relating to the turbine project. It also provides EDP the opportunity to share information about the project with the community.
3. **Project Update (Ken Little and Erika Nelson, EDP).** An update of the South Branch Wind Project was provided by Ken Little and Erika Nelson (EDP). Highlights of the presentation included the following:
  - a) **Road User's Agreement Compensation Fund.** Road user's agreement payments have been finalized by EDP. Funds were allocated based on an engineering study conducted in South Dundas, North Dundas and the United Counties of SD&G.
  - b) **Bird and bat mortality monitoring update.** The second year of bird and bat mortality monitoring is underway and commenced on May 1, 2015.
  - c) **Acoustic monitoring.** The spring acoustic audits are now complete and have been submitted to MOECC.
  - d) **Community Benefit Fund.** The deadline for South Branch Community benefit fund submissions is May 29, 2015. Additional information can be found on South Dundas Township website.
  - e) **Operations update.** With the exception of repairs to turbine 110, all operations are running smoothly.
4. **Depositions.** One deposition was brought forward and addressed. The deposition was summarized as having three separate areas of concern. They were as follows:
  - a) **Value loss on homes and Property tax value changes.** The deposition asked if home owners near wind turbines would receive compensation for property loss resulting from proximity to the SBWF. The second concern, which was addressed in conjunction with concern (a) asked if homeowners should expect their property tax to decrease as a result of reduced property value resulting from proximity to wind turbines? Ken Little (EDP) addressed the deposition with an MPAC study, titled "Impact of Industrial Wind Turbines on Residential Property Assessment in Ontario," released in Ontario in April 2015 which concluded that results provided reliable evidence that demonstrates no significant impacts on property values for homes in proximity to a wind farm.
  - b) One community member (A.C.) asked if the homes assessed were homes on the market. Ken confirmed the study was conducted on homes for sale only. A.C. added she believed impact on values is likely to depend on proximity and number of turbines present.
  - c) **Bat mortalities and impacts on ecosystem:** The third concern of the deposition asked if bat mortalities resulting in turbine activities will have an impact on local ecosystem. Ken

Little (EDP) responded with explanation that SBWF follows regulations set forth by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the MOECC. The regulations are developed such that they set thresholds aimed at minimizing negative impacts on local bat, bird and raptor populations as well as being protective of the local ecology as an integrated natural system. As a result of bat mortality rates calculated using the prescribed mathematical and scientific models exceeding the thresholds in the first year of monitoring; EDP will implement mitigation measures during the bat migration season (July 15- Sep 30) aimed at reducing bat mortalities resulting from the turbines. The mitigation measures will consist of reduced turbine operation times and speeds during the migration period.

## 5. Questions and Answers/Other Discussion

A series of questions were raised during discussion of the deposition concerns. The questions will be discussed in this section of the summary of discussion.

- a) A question was asked if the acoustic audits completed by EDP include internal acoustics (testing within homes). Ken Little (EDP) replied by answering no and that the studies were done in accordance with the prescribed standards in the REA Approval. It was proposed by Francois Lauzon that a new deposition regarding indoor noise be addressed at the next CLC meeting to address the community member's concerns about noise within homes resulting from turbines. Terri Forrester (MOECC) also suggested that EDP discuss the results of the Acoustic Impact Study at the next CLC meeting. The community member asked Terri if EDP was considered to not be in compliance with their MOECC permit because the acoustic audit did not include results from the fall. Terri responded by saying that EDP did attempt to collect data but the wind speeds were not sufficient to complete the fall acoustic audits; she believes that EDP has made adequate attempts to collect fall data in accordance with the prescribed standard in the REA Approval given the weather conditions. Terri also stated that MOECC acoustic audits did not produce any alarming results.
- b) A question was raised asking why acoustic audits are completed only in the spring and fall. Ken Little explained the seasons are specified by government regulations and the Project REA Approval.
- c) A question was asked if turbines turn if there is no wind. Ken Little and Erika Nelson (EDP) answered no. The same community member then asked where the electricity went. Ken Little explained the power line route and described that ultimately, the power goes back to local homes. The community member asked why does their electricity bill still keep going up in price? Ken and Erika explained that EDP ultimately sells the electricity generated from the wind farm to the IESO; however, a residential electricity bill includes more than just electricity purchase costs, including delivery of electricity which is substantial in rural Hydro One distribution areas.
- d) Two community members asked for clarification regarding bird and bat mortality monitoring, specifically if seasons are considered and if scavenge rates of fresh compared to frozen carcasses are factored in the study? Ken Little, Francois Lauzon, and Kin Wenborn all provided information regarding scavenger trials, searcher efficiency

trials, and statistics utilized to estimate mortality rates, seasonal testing requirements, etc. A question was asked about what the coyote population is in the area? Kim Wenborn explained the purpose of the scavenger trials is to determine how many carcasses are removed from the search areas by all scavengers, not specific species such as coyotes. These studies do not seek to enumerate scavengers/species, but rather to provide statistical data to not underestimate actual mortality rates. Another community member suggested that EDP place fencing around search areas to deter scavengers. It was discussed that ultimately, fencing would not deter avian scavengers or burrowing species from recovering carcasses. Based on the latter, it was unlikely that fencing would provide any valid relief in the evaluation of these studies. It was also acknowledged that the design of the studies do not intend the use of fencing to prevent scavengers from retrieving carcasses.

- e) A question was asked if any Bobolinks were killed during the construction. Ken Little replied with no, none were reported that he is aware of.
- f) Terri Forrester asked EDP if the results of studies could be posted on their website. EDP agreed that anyone could access the information through a normal Access to Information Request. They will consider the merits and requirements of posting studies, such as the acoustic study, and provide feedback through their Web site or at the next CLC meeting.
- g) Bill Byker asked EDP to speak about contracts regarding land owner agreements. Ken Little clarified that the landowner's property is leased in order to place project related infrastructure on the property and liens are kept clear from the landowner's title.
- h) It was suggested by community member (A.C.) that steps that EDP intends on implementing and also advancements in the operation of wind farms be presented during the next CLC meeting.

## **6. Wrap-up/Closing**

The next CLC meeting is planned for winter, 2016 after mortality monitoring and acoustic audits are complete. All meeting participants were thanked for coming and the meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.