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To: [Sara Poirier](#); [Kari Fougere](#); [PublicOnlyCouncilEmail](#)
Subject: MPS-Visual Intrusiveness
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Dear Ms. Poirier/ Ms Fougere

In regard to the Bear Lake wind farm proposal the issue of visual intrusiveness was brought up by several residents at the initial public meeting about the project. At the Planning and Advisory Committee meeting in October, your slide presentation shared a summary of resident concerns, yet the matter of visual intrusiveness was not included. This was brought to your attention during the PAC meeting yet at the recent council meeting (November 2024) for first reading of the development agreement, the same slides were presented and again the residents' expressed concern of the impact of visual intrusiveness was omitted as part of the summary slide. Going forward, I ask that the impact of visual intrusiveness on the Upper Vaughan Community as expressed by residents be included within the municipality's presentations.

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) specifically states:

Policy 4.24.4 It shall be the policy of Council to consider the development of permanent or long-term installations of large wind turbines or wind farms outside the Growth Centre, Village and Hamlet designations by development agreement, having regard to the following:

- (a) any required provincial and/or federal government environmental assessment processes have been completed.*
- (b) adequate separation distances are maintained from adjacent land uses to minimize impacts of noise and shadow and to ensure public safety;*
- (c) the development is not visually intrusive in the landscape, taking into account the location and distance from which it is visible, and the significance and sensitivity of the landscape, topography, vegetation and built form in the surrounding area;*
- (d) safe roadway access can be provided*
- (e) any other matter which may be addressed in a development agreement; and*
- (f) Policy 16.3.1.*

The MPS states that council must "take into account the location and the distance from which it is visible". Policy 4.24 of the MPS addresses appropriate setbacks for wind turbines up to 400 ft tall. The current "standard" is 1000 from dwellings.

The Bear Lake wind turbines are 677 ft tall. In other words, 70% taller than current policy addresses. Using simple math $677\text{ft}/400\text{ft} \times 1000\text{m} = 1692\text{ meters}$. This would make them appear to be of relative size to a 400 ft turbine at 1000m. That is, a similar visual intrusiveness to a 400 ft tall turbine. I therefore suggest that the minimum

setback be set at 1692 metres from the closest property boundary of a non-participating property owner.

A Google search informs us that the tallest land-based wind turbine in Canada is actually located in Nine Mile River, NS. The V122 turbine is 156m/512ft tall from base to the tip of the blade arc and is coupled with a smaller sister turbine in the two-turbine location. At a height of 675 feet the proposed turbines for the Bear Lake project will be 163 feet greater in height. An independent consultant engaged by local residents confirmed that on a clear day the proposed windmills will be visible from Oak Island, Nova Scotia. Imagine being able to view these giant turbines from that distance. Think about the visual intrusiveness for the residents living next to them. At night these monsters of the sky will glow red further adding to the overall visual intrusion and light pollution of the local landscape.

While thinking about setback and visual intrusiveness, once again, I would like to state that it is unfair to property owners whose property extends toward a turbine that they would not have the same setback if there were not already an existing dwelling at the property boundary closest to the wind turbine. Setbacks for windmills need to be from property lines as opposed to dwellings. Property owners should not face diminished values or loss of future use of their property due to setback issues.

I truly do not understand the Planning Departments continued recommendation to have the setback of windmills 1000m from dwellings. I recall a relatively recent council meeting where the topic of discussion was about the location of a chicken coop. The outcome was that the structure had to be a required distance from the neighboring property line. Seems rather bazaar that the location of a chicken coop would need to be based off the property line, yet 15 giant wind turbines each being 60 plus stories tall do not need to adhere to the same standard or regulation.

The concept that developments must not be visually intrusive to the landscape is a core essential criteria of development agreements within the MPS and must be seriously evaluated. This is simply not a box to be ticked. I implore the council to seek further guidance and information from independent sources prior to any approval of the proposed Bear Lake project.

Regards,
Seamus Marriott