



Municipality of the District of West Hants

STAFF REPORT – INFORMATION WORKSHOP

TO: West Hants Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Jeanne Bourque, Planner

DATE: January 16, 2014

SUBJECT: **January 9, 2014 Information Workshop
Martock Ridge Community Wind Project**

ORIGIN

On November 14, 2013, planning staff recommended that the Planning Advisory Committee adjust the public consultation process for the Martock Ridge Community Wind Project. A public information workshop was added to help gather input and provide an informal venue for the public to ask questions in an information exchange.

WORKSHOP SYNOPSIS

Approximately 60 members of the public in attendance, including landowners and residents.

Information panel:

Karen Dempsey - West Hants Planning (moderator)
Jeanne Bourque - West Hants Planning
Steve Sanford - Nova Scotia Environment
Krystal Thieren - Dept of Energy
Dan Roscoe - Scotian WindFields Inc
Shawn Duncan - Strum Consulting (environmental studies)
Ron Hiltz - WSP Group (formerly Genivar, civil design)
Neil Lovitt - Scotian WindFields Inc

QUESTIONS

Over about two hours, a variety of questions asked which were answered by various members of the panel table. Many related to the application process, both at the provincial and municipal levels. Staff noted that this was the first application for a development agreement to permit large scale wind turbines in West Hants. The majority of speakers expressed concern surrounding the protection of the water supply and quality in the watershed, comments were made both for and against the proposal. The issues that may be dealt with through the municipal planning process are addressed in the staff report dated January 16, 2014.

An overview of the questions raised:

- Effect of potential blasting on water supply.
- Liability insurance in case of damage to water supply – is it provided, by whom, how?
- Land Lease Option and Land Lease Agreement between Town of Windsor and Scotian Windfields.
- Income to Town from leasing the land.
- Income to other landowners, why can't they participate. Limit on size of project, explanation of feeding into the NSPI Mountain Road substation versus feeding into the main NSPI grid.
- Income to West Hants from tax on turbines base on wattage.
- Income from ComFIT Community Dividend – determining membership on Community Liaison Committee, who gets benefits from dividend, all to be determined on an ongoing basis.
- Questions on Provincial Environmental Assessment process.
- Questions about municipal Development Agreement process – wind farms are evaluated on a case by case basis. Final decision made by Council.
- How sound levels are set by NSE to protect human health.
- How minimum setbacks are set by NSE (sound and flicker).
- Policing of use of new roads, who will be responsible, how will it be done?
- Questions regarding current ability of landowners to develop, municipal restrictions in place.
- Questions regarding upgrading of existing roads and new road construction, and potential for negative impact on water supply.

NEXT STEPS

The next step is the presentation to Planning Advisory Committee of the staff report reviewing the application in light of the Municipal Planning Strategy policies. This will take place on Thursday, January 16th, 2014, 6:30 pm, at the Municipal Council Chambers. Members of the public are welcome to attend. The PAC agenda does accommodate public participation, but in a more formal format overseen by the PAC chair. There will also be a formal Public Hearing held by Council prior to any decision being made on the application. This Public Hearing will be advertised in the Hants Journal, and landowners within two kilometers of the proposed project will be notified by mail.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeanne Bourque
Planner