

**MUNICIPALITY OF THE
DISTRICT OF DIGBY
PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

COMMITTEE	Planning Advisory Committee
MEETING LOCATION	Council Chambers, Municipal Administration Building, Seabrook, Digby County
DATE OF MEETING	June 24, 2008

CALL TO ORDER	<p>Warden Jim Thurber called the meeting to order at 6.03 p.m. The members of the PAC introduced themselves.</p> <p>Warden Thurber made a few opening remarks concerning meeting procedures, outlining opportunities for public input.</p>
ATTENDANCE	<p>Warden Jim Thurber Deputy Warden Jimmy MacAlpine Mason VanTassell, Citizen Representative Nora Peach, Citizen Representative Glenn Dunn, Citizen Representative</p> <p>Linda Fraser, CAO Chris Millier, 4 Site Group Grant Cook, 4 Site Group</p>
REGRETS	Councillor Randall Amero – Councillor Amero has declared a conflict with respect to wind energy development.
AGENDA	<p>Moved by Mason VanTassell seconded by Deputy Warden MacAlpine , that the agenda be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Motion Carried</p>
MINUTES	<p>Moved by Deputy Warden MacAlpine, seconded by Mason VanTassell that the minutes of May 6, 2008 be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Motion Carried</p>

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PRESENTATION	<p>Moved by Mason VanTassell, seconded by Deputy Warden MacAlpine that Gerard Wood make a presentation to the Committee.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Motion Carried</p> <p>A copy of Mr. Wood’s presentation is attached.</p> <p>Warden Thurber thanked Mr. Wood and invited him to pass on any information he gathers to the CAO.</p>
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BUSINESS ARISING /OLD BUSINESS	

NEW BUSINESS	
Background Report for the preparation of a MPS/LUB to Regulate the Location of Wind Turbines in the Municipality of the District of Digby	<p>Chris Millier and Grant Cook from the 4 Site Group reviewed the Background Report. This report when approved by the PAC will become part of the public record for this planning process. Once considered complete then can be adopted formally by the committee for distribution to public.</p> <p>The following points were highlighted and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 1 - Introduction -there are two turbines in the Municipality one of which is in East Ferry, not Tiverton. • Page 2 - Municipal Profile – question rose as to why the reference to our high illiteracy rates and aging population needs to be included. This data is factual data taken from census information. • Page 3 - Glossary of Terms – It is important for the PAC to have a common level of understanding and background on wind turbine definitions in planning documents as well as general planning terms.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitions are very critical in MPS/LUB and it is important to use definitions that are understandable to the general public and which are consistent with the wind industry. • Page 5 –Provincial Legislation – Any wind energy project larger than 2 MW require a provincial environmental assessment. This process invites the public to submit written comments to the Department of Environment. The process also includes public meetings in the area of the development. Issues relating to bird migration, bats, telecommunications cannot be regulated by the municipality as they fall under Provincial or Federal regulations. These issues will be dealt with under the Provincial Environmental Impact Assessment. In the Jacques-Whitford report, there is specific mention of the Digby Neck area and bird migration. • Page 7 - Impact of Wind Energy Development. The UNSM report “<i>Model Wind Turbine By-Laws and Best Practices for NS Municipalities</i>” undertaken by Jacques-Whitford Ltd (October 2007-January 2008) identified 15 different impacts from wind turbine development. Of those 15, only 8 are within the jurisdiction of municipalities. Of the remaining 8, there are three recurring themes. These are noise, visual impacts and property values. Noise, property value, visual impacts are where most residents look for regulations by the Municipality. Other impacts such as ice and blade throw, shadow flicker, only have an impact within 200 to 250 metres from the turbine. Shadow flicker occurs when the sun hits the rotating blades causing dark to light shadows. This only occurs at certain angles of the sun. Blade throw, ice throw, failure of turbine can be dealt with under separation distances 1 x height of tower 200 or 250 metres travelled. Worse case scenario, 2 or 3 times height of tower
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- Roads fall under both the municipal and provincial regulations. Roads built in relation to a wind turbine development are, as with other private roads, are allowed “as of right”.

Noise (Page 8)

The impact of noise from wind turbines is one that is most often the subject of much debate. There is a lack of commonly accepted standards and varying perspectives regarding concerns around noise, infrasound and amplitude modulation. Regulations are inconsistent and the lack of uncertainty will make the issue of mitigating noise very difficult for the PAC. The impact of noise depends on many different factors such as rural setting vs more urban setting, type of wind turbine, vegetation, topography, height of turbines, etc.

In response to a question, Chris Millier indicated that computer models do exist that can make a projection of noise based on specific factors before the turbine is built. Unfortunately, there is no scientific data comparing the estimated noise to the actual once the turbine has been built.

Comfort levels for noise from wind turbines are generally between 35-40 Db. Can be 10-15 Db variance depending upon individuals. Lowering of threshold when Db used as a regulation guideline. Not used by many (only 1) municipal unit as a regulatory tool.

Visual Impacts (Page 10)

Visual Impacts again are very subjective. There is a significant change to landscape caused by large scale turbines, less by domestic. Wind farms have more of an impact than single large scale turbines. Jacques Whitford report talks refers to large uninterrupted visual landscape which may have a greater ability to accommodate and neutralize impact of turbines.

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	<p>Assessment of visual impacts, are qualitative and very subjective. Research and science is at odds, no consensus. Turbines will change landscape, however it is not known if positive or negative.</p> <p>Property Values (Page 11)</p> <p>Impact on property values. Only UK and US have done any research. Over time little to no impact, may be some positive of wind development. Attracts residents looking for communities trying to use “green” energy alternatives.</p> <p>Moved by Mason VanTassell, seconded by Deputy Warden MacAlpine that the meeting continue beyond the two hour limit.</p> <p style="text-align:right">Motion Carried</p> <p>The PAC was asked if they felt there were any other impacts they would like the consultants to research. A question was raised as to if there were any studies that could be compared to Digby County of visual impacts of wind turbines. The foothills in Alberta may have similar visual impacts.</p> <p>Action: Chris Millier to look at visual impact assessment examples and how can be applied to Digby Municipality.</p> <p>Experiences in Other Provinces –Page 12 Chris Millier reviewed wind energy development in Prince Edward Island and in Alberta.</p> <p>Planning in other NS Municipalities – Page 14 Grant Cook reviewed the table outlining the extent of wind energy development and the requirements in land use by-laws of other NS Municipalities.</p> <p>There are many different planning approaches when regulating wind turbine. Setbacks seemed to be the most widely most used but development agreements are becoming more popular.</p>
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	<p>Use of set backs from residential uses or from lot lines are administrated by the development officer and the council/community does not get involved.</p> <p>Use of site plans, development agreements, rezoning, involve public hearings and council makes the decision of each development on a case by case basis. Two very different development control approaches.</p> <p>Proposed Wind Farm – Discussion of whether or not new land use by-law would affect recently announced project on Digby Neck.</p> <p>Public Comments/Input Chris & Grant to deal with questions and prepare answers to be sent back to individual posing question. Also a compiled list of questions and answers can be posted on the municipal website under the banner: The Community Recently Asked About...</p> <p>All comments and questions will be circulated to PAC members.</p>
NEXT MEETING	July 15 @ 4:00 pm.
ADJOURNMENT	<p>Moved by Mason VanTassell, seconded by Deputy Warden MacAlpine that the meeting adjourn at 8:31 pm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Motion Carried</p>
MINUTES CERTIFICATION	<p>_____</p> <p>CHAIR</p> <p>_____</p> <p>SECRETARY</p>