Springwood Community Liaison Meeting

Type: wpd Canada –Springwood Project Local Community
Date: October 23, 2014 | 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Location: Elora Legion Branch 229, Patio Room, 110 Metcalfe St., Elora, ON

Attendees: wpd –Paul Deol, Jennifer Ng, Jonathan Clifford
Stantec/Facilitator – Herb Shields
Stantec/Terrestrial Ecologist – Nicole Kopysh
13 members of the public

Reference: Springwood Wind Project Development

Agenda:

- Introductions
- Update from Last Meeting
- Project Updates – Construction, Operations, Monitoring
- Discussion
- Next Steps

Highlights:
Post-construction bird/bat monitoring
Methodology of sound monitoring

Meeting Summary:

- HS: Welcomed attendees and outlined the purpose of the meeting:
  - Continued engagement efforts from last meeting
  - To engage the public and have an informative conversation about the Springwood Wind Project
  - Provide a project update
  - Collect any feedback or matters to be addressed from the community

- wpd: Began by presenting on the CLC
  - Summarized some changes from the previous meeting:
    - Meeting set at 7:00pm due to request for later time slot
    - Nicole Kopysch attendance due to request for more detailed information on bird/bat monitoring
    - Previous CLC Meeting minutes posted directly to project website

- wpd: Provided an update on project construction to date and the current status (see presentation)
- wpd: Explained that the turbines have been installed, and are connected to the grid. They will undergo operational testing, and then become fully operational.

General Project Questions

- Q: What is the exact start date of the 20 year operational phase, and what happens at the end of the 20 years?
- A: The start date would begin with full operation (in November, 2014); upon completion of the operational phase, turbines may either be repowered, or decommissioned and dismantled.
- Q: What is the price paid for the power produced?
- A: 13.5 cents/hWh.
- A: Asked how much the project makes per year, and expressed concern about the price paid for wind power in general.
- A: Indicated the previous CLC Meeting Minutes provided figures for power produced and amount paid. Also explained that a developer does not receive any subsidies; they are only paid for the power they produce.
- Q: Asked why the lights can be seen from the ground (when they're meant for planes in the air), and why they're all lit vs. just one.
- A: Explained that these are Transport Canada standards, and must be followed. However, noted that one of the turbine lights has been turned off, and also indicated that wpd would consider any technological advances regarding lighting.
- Q: Concerned about vortices, and their potential effects on hang gliders.
- A: Noted that more information had been added to the CLC3 meeting minutes, and also offered to e-mail the information directly.
- Q: Re-iterated his concerns about his TV reception.
- A: Requested the CLC participant to contact wpd directly with specific symptoms, and noted wpd could begin addressing the issue.
- Q: Asked how much authority the MOECC had over the project, and whether they could theoretically order the project to stop altogether.
- A: Explained wpd Canada must follow many regulations and that theoretically, the MOECC (as well as other approval authorities) could stop the project.
- Q: What happens if the federal study on wind power and health identifies potential health problems?
- A: No one study would be considered conclusive; it would add to the body of literature surrounding wind energy.
- Q: Pressed wpd staff to answer whether wpd would stop the project if the study concluded there were health effects.
- A; Responded that wpd would look to the government to make any changes if necessary but again emphasized that the results, whatever they may be, would only add to the body of literature.

Emission/Immission Testing (Sound)

- Q: Wanted to know who was responsible for the emission/immission testing.
- A: wpd contracts the completion of the tests, and the results are sent to the government.
- Q: How many turbines will be tested (emission)?
- A: Explained emission testing happens at every turbine, and that the immision measurement account for all turbines (cumulative).
- Q: Is the immission testing a single or cumulative measurement?
- Immission testing is cumulative. Q: Where is the sound measured from?
- A: Emissions are measured at each turbine, and immissions are measured at the point of highest predicted reception.

- Q: When are the tests conducted, and at what operating speed?
- A: Testing is generally completed in the spring and in the fall, in order to measure maximum sound levels.
- Q: What is the maximum sound level permitted?
- A: Sound levels cannot exceed 40dBA.
- Q: What weighting is used to measure sound levels?
- A: A-weighting will be used.
- Q: Will the sound from transformers be measured?
- A: There is virtually no sound emitted from the transformers, which are located at the base of the tower.
- Q: How exactly will the measuring be carried out?
- A: The sound measurements are done over time, and will be measured both at non-operational and operational times to determine the baseline.
- Q: Will infrasound be measured? (concerns about health)
- A: There is ongoing study about infrasound, but the academic literature suggests there aren't any effects on human health. Infrasound is not included in the noise tests.

Bird and Bat Monitoring, Natural Environment

- Q: What is considered an "acceptable" level of deaths/turbine during bird/bat monitoring, and what would happen in the scenario where these numbers are exceeded?
- A: Numbers were outlined in the presentation. In the scenario where these numbers are exceeded, mitigation/contingency measures must be put in place. These measures were also discussed in the presentation. Stantec also noted mitigation measures are monitored for effectiveness.
- Q: Who conducts the bird/bat monitoring surveys?
- A: Stantec conducts the surveys – they are contracted by wpd, but are independent professional consultants.
- Q: Are scavengers of dead birds/bats accounted for? If so, how?
- A: Stantec explained that measurements are corrected to account for several things, including scavengers: carcasses are left around the turbine base, and the scavenger rate of these control carcasses will be used to correct measurements.
- Q: Will the carcasses increase the presence of other predators?
- A: Stantec noted they had not seen any evidence to suggest so, as the observed mortalities are quite low.
- Q: Are there any impacts to organisms under and near ground, such as worms?
- A: Stantec has not observed any impacts in their monitoring experience.
- Q: What is the circumference of the monitoring area from the base of the turbine?
- A: Bird monitoring surveys are done in 5m increments, out to 50m away from the turbine base. These numbers are based on scientific evidence from Environment Canada's standards from observed results.
- Q: What if the area is "unsearchable", i.e. corn during crop season?
- A: Calculations can correct for unsearchable areas.
- Q: Asked if it's possible for a concerned citizen to attend some of the surveys.
- A: Stantec noted it would depend on the developer

General comments:

- Feels that wpd contracting its own bird/bat monitoring and emission/immission testing does not foster trust from the community
- Stantec explained the methodology behind the emission/immission and bird/bat monitoring, and that the standards are dictated by government bodies informed by rigorous research and government studies.
- Commented that they understood wpd had followed all the regulations, but felt frustrated with the process. Commenter feels citizens don't have a voice in the process.

Next steps:

- Meeting minutes
- Continue to update the website
- Any feedback on how we are doing this, please let us know