

July 06, 2015

Resolution of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Addington Highlands

WHEREAS there are two (2) proposed Industrial Wind Turbine Projects within the Township of Addington Highlands, being Northpoint II and the Denbigh Wind Farm;

AND WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Addington Highlands has received a request from NextEra Energy Canada with respect to the 'Northpoint II' Industrial Wind Turbine Project for a Municipal Support Resolution;

AND WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Addington Highlands has received a request from Renewable Energy Systems Canada with respect to the 'Denbigh Wind Farm' Industrial Wind Turbine Project for a Municipal Support Resolution;

AND WHEREAS Council has received input from the Community (permanent and seasonal residents) both in favour and not in favour of the Industrial Wind Turbine Projects, with a clear majority opposed to having Industrial Wind Turbines in the Township of Addington Highlands;

AND WHEREAS the Township of Addington Highlands has defined in its Official Plan its vision to "promote and enhance economic development while simultaneously protecting the natural environment and resources, preserving the pristine character of the lands and waters, and maintaining and enhancing the existing sense of community in the Township."

AND WHEREAS the Premier of Ontario has conveyed the Ontario Governments desire to limit Industrial Wind Turbine projects to communities that are 'Willing Hosts';

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Addington Highlands will not provide a Municipal Support Resolution for any Industrial Wind Turbine Project;

AND THAT Council declares the Township of Addington Highlands as 'Not a Willing Host' for Industrial Wind Turbine projects;

AND THAT Council realizes the two proposed projects could still proceed without Municipal Support, as per the Green Energy Act; however, Council will continue to be diligent and do what is within its power to oppose these and future Industrial Wind Turbine projects if a Proponent is awarded a contract to proceed;

AND THAT the Clerk Treasurer is instructed to provide a copy of this Resolution to NextEra Energy Canada and Renewable Energy Systems Canada in response to their requests for Municipal Support;

AND THAT Council approves the contents of the draft letter included in the Agenda and instructs the Clerk Treasurer to format, obtain signature and forward the letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne; the Minister of Energy; the Minister of the Environment; the Minister of Natural Resources; the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Randy Hillier - MPP; the Board of Directors of the Independent

Electricity System Operator (IESO), the Council of the County of Lennox and Addington; the Council of the Township of Stone Mills, the Council of the Township of Brudenell Lyndoch and Raglan, the Council of the Township of Carlow/Mayo, the Council of the Township of Tudor and Cashel, the Council of the Municipality of Tweed, the Council of the Township of Central Frontenac, the Council of the Township of Greater Madawaska, and the Council of the Township of North Frontenac;

AND THAT Council instructs the Clerk Treasurer to prepare a Notice to communicate this information to the Residents of the Township of Addington Highlands which is to be added to the Township's website and posted at the Municipal Office; and to send a copy of this Resolution and a cover letter to all Business and Cottage Association contacts and all email addresses provided by Residents in their response on the proposed wind turbines.

Notice of Motion and supporting information submitted by Councillor Tony Fritsch to Township Staff on July 2, 2015 for inclusion in the July 6, 2015 Council meeting agenda.

Supporting Information for Notice of Motion & Contents of Draft Letter to Premier Kathleen Wynn

The Council of the Township of Addington Highlands met on July 6, 2015 to discuss requests from NextEra Energy Canada and Renewable Energy Systems Canada, to provide municipal support for two industrial wind turbine projects in the Township of Addington Highlands. The two projects are named Northpoint II for up to 100 wind turbines and the Denbigh Wind Farm for up to 50 wind turbines. Both companies have long range plans to pursue expansion or densification of the above projects in order to optimize additional new projects if there is any opportunity.

Our Township, Its Vision and Importance to Ontario

The Township of Addington Highlands is a 1,330 square kilometer lower-tier municipality, part of the County of Lennox and Addington. We have approximately 2,550 permanent residents and at least 5000 seasonal residents. The low density of the population (1.9 people per square kilometer) necessitates and creates a vibrant intimate community network of permanent and seasonal residents. The Township of Addington Highlands is set in the heart of eastern Ontario's cottage country in the Land O' Lakes Region. It is a popular destination for outdoor activities, and is promoted as such by the Province, the County of Lennox and Addington, the Land O Lakes Tourist Association, local businesses, residents and tourists.

Addington Highlands lies within a tourist region known as "Land 'O Lakes". It is blessed with hundreds of clean lakes draped in a breathtaking mantle of ancient white pines, red and white oak, sugar Maple and many more. Beneath the trees are ever spreading wildflowers and fruit bearing shrubs. We are proud of this wealth and we must take care, to be stewards of these riches. The natural, undisturbed wilderness attracts countless hikers, fishermen, campers, snowmobilers, hunters, eco-tourists and cottagers, among others. Residents and visitors alike value the natural beauty, wildlife, outdoor activities and the relatively undisturbed tranquility of our surroundings. We must act in accordance with our Township vision and be wise stewards of our land so it will remain rich for future generations to enjoy.

A key element of our vision is to protect the natural environment and resources, and preserve the pristine character of the lands and waters.

With the ongoing Provincial push for urban growth, densification, and inevitable urban creep into surrounding farmlands, small communities and natural areas, it is increasingly important to protect our pristine unspoiled environment for future generations. If we do not do it now, it will never happen.

Resolution Rationale – How we Arrived at this Decision:

The Council of the Township of Addington Highlands passed their attached resolution based on the following factors:

1. Representation of those who elected us to office:

- Section 224 of the Municipal Act, 2001: “It is the role of council (a) “to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality”.

- The vast majority of residents are not in favour of Industrial Wind Turbine projects:
 - 83% of residents who provided written evidence of their position to the Township through letters, forms, faxes, signing a hard copy petition or on line petition, are opposed.
 - Cottager associations do not support it. For example a documented cottager survey indicates 87% opposed.
 - Community Town hall group secret ballot referendum indicated 97 percent opposition.
 - On line survey results indicate an overwhelming majority are opposed.
- We swore an oath to represent our residents, and we must do just that.

2. The project does not fit with our long term sustainability and economic development strategy for the Township of Addington Highlands

- From our Official Plan: "promote and enhance economic development while simultaneously protecting the natural environment and resources, preserving the pristine character of the lands and waters, and maintaining and enhancing the existing sense of community in the Township."
- Our Council demonstrates vision and sound leadership with its strategy to protect the natural beauty of our area, and focus on growth and development that protects our pristine unspoiled community and minimizes any negative environmental or wildlife impact. An Industrial Wind Turbine project does not fit this vision.
- Growth of small businesses and pursuit of new businesses and services (stores, garages, contractor and trades services, gas stations, resorts, and health related facilities) has been a focus of Addington Highlands.

3. Economic Effects:

- The proposed projects have possible short term employment opportunities for local residents and companies during the construction phase and a handful of permanent jobs during the operation phase. There are also various payments to private landowners as defined in their 'lease' agreements with the developers. In addition there would be additional tax revenue and funding through Community Vibrancy Agreements.
- The emotional enticement of money is overshadowed by logic and common sense which clearly illustrate that Industrial Wind Turbines do not belong in our community. The reasons are:
 - Destruction of the natural unspoiled beauty of the area; this unspoiled beauty is the reason why we live here and the reason why we are a significant cottager and tourism community.
 - Planned or installed industrial wind turbine projects will discourage potential investors from considering our area for future tourism related development projects.
 - The risk of the public being unwillingly saddled with decommissioning costs of turbines and their infrastructure at the end of their life or operation.
 - The long term negative impact of industrial wind turbines on our residents, visitors, our future generation, our Township, and our future Councils
 - Property devaluation: Reduction in number of potential buyers. Overall drop in value with wind turbines in sight or the apparent potential for future turbine developments.

4. Sense of Community:

- Even at this early stage of the project, it is causing residential infighting, including a split in the community between the "for" and "not for" proponents.
- As many of our permanent residents are retirees living here due to their attachment for and love of the natural environment and strong sense of community, and the majority of our ratepayers are seasonal property owners who chose our area for relaxation and the natural setting, it is highly probable that an installed industrial wind turbine project would create generations of dispute and friction. A strong vibrant rural community is more important than a dubious promise of money.

5. Environmental and Health Impacts;

- The initial two projects involve 100 to 150 turbines, with the potential to add 100 or more in future projects. The impact on our scenic natural community would be devastating. The current rolling forested landscape with its myriad of lakes, ponds, wetlands, rivers and creeks would be speckled with protruding steel turbines and carved up with a maze of 80 to 100 foot wide road and hydro line right-of-ways. By comparison a small local development such as a 'Tourist Resort' has a local impact, however a broad wind turbine development impacts tens of thousands of acres.
- There are many claims of negative health effects related to industrial wind turbines. Research in this area is in its infancy with many pro and con articles written on the subject. The possibility of adverse health effects should not be overlooked or dismissed.

6. The Green Energy Act:

- The basic fact that we pay the producer of 'green energy' more than what we sell it for hits a nerve of virtually everyone who pays an electrical utility bill. This subsidization at our expense must be stopped.
- The Act and the procurement processes related to Green Energy are faulty. The Act should be nullified or at the very least revised to provide veto power to the Municipality.
- Our Municipality was not aware of these new proposed projects until a few months ago. There is an inadequate lead time for us to do our homework properly. Any 'developer' wishing to pursue a wind turbine project should be required to notify the Municipality and all its ratepayers ahead of doing any work on the ground e.g. wind measurement installations, private property leasing etc. In our case, this should have been done at least two years ago.
- The process allows 'developers' to secretly sign up leases with private landowners, often using aggressive and misleading sales tactics. This leads to vulnerable landowners not understanding the full implications of a lease until after they have signed it and they start learning more details and issues as the project becomes public. In addition, there is a perception that the process is intended to give an advantage, in future negotiations, to the developer.
- The fact that that legislation would allow the project to go ahead, when the community does not want it and the Municipality has declared itself an 'Unwilling Host' is not democratic.

It is our intention as an 'unwilling host' of industrial wind turbines, to take any actions possible to prevent industrial wind turbines from ever being constructed in the Township of Addington Highlands.

We have a vision and strategy for economic development and to put this type of project in our Township would destroy our sense of community, negatively impact future development , and mar its unspoiled natural beauty. We, the residents of Addington Highlands, must protect and preserve our beautiful, natural environment for our children and for future residents. It is a heritage we are proud of and we expect to keep it an area that Ontario and Canada can be proud of.

We ask the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Energy to take this resolution and similar resolutions seriously, take action to support it, and allow us to pursue community sustainability and development in a direction that preserves our rural and natural setting.