



For release: August 31, 2009

NEWS RELEASE

Public Meeting on Wind Energy

Picton ON - The Council of the County of Prince Edward is holding a Special Council Meeting to receive public input and information on the development of wind energy within the County. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 29, 2009 at 7:00 pm at the Prince Edward Community Centre.

The Green Energy Act, 2009 (The Act) received Royal Assent on May 14, 2009. The legislation will exempt renewable energy projects, including wind, from local land use planning approvals.

The proposed regulations will implement a new one-window provincial renewable energy approval process and standardize minimum noise requirements and setbacks. Municipalities will no longer have approval authority over the size, scale, location or siting details for these projects. It is anticipated that municipalities will be "consulted" on potential impacts on municipal services and infrastructure, but beyond this there will likely be little, if any, regulatory role for municipalities in renewable energy projects.

"The Green Energy Act and the proposed development of wind energy in the County has resulted in unprecedented interest and diverse opinions within the community. The Act and its proposed regulations also removes Council's ability to approve, deny or manage significant industrial development within our borders," said Mayor Leo P. Finnegan. "The fact that local governments have been excluded from the decision making process doesn't stop us from hearing from all sides of the issue and providing the community with a forum to share information and understand each other's points of view. I will ensure that the meeting is conducted with the utmost respect for all parties."

The information gathered will be made available to potential wind energy developers and to the Province of Ontario, as the regulating authority. It will be of value to Council and staff in the development of any future position or policy statements related to wind energy.

There are several opportunities to participate with all materials submitted forming part of the public record:

1. Contact the Clerk to be listed on the agenda. Deputations that are listed on the agenda will be given 10 minutes to make their presentation. It will be necessary to submit deputation requests, along with a full copy of the submission, to the Clerk no later than September 23, 2009 at 4:30 pm;
2. Speak without prior registration during the 'Comments from the Audience' portion of the meeting. These deputations will be given 3 minutes to make their presentations. All comments, submissions and information are requested to be provided in writing at the meeting; or
3. Send a letter or email on the subject.

For information on the Green Energy Act visit <http://www.mei.gov.on.ca/english/energy/gea> or the County website at www.pecounty.on.ca. A background is attached to this release.

Backgrounder - Public Meeting on Wind Energy

To date, Council has received a considerable degree of information and input into the subject of wind energy development in Prince Edward County. Deputations and written submissions on the subject identify a wide range of opinions and significant numbers in favour, as well as opposed, to wind energy development in Prince Edward County. The municipality has participated in the limited opportunities available to influence the new legislation and regulations, as detailed below:

In response to growing public concerns with respect to potential health impacts of proposed wind energy development in Prince Edward County, Council passed the following resolution in December 2008:

"WHEREAS Prince Edward County is an island municipality located in Lake Ontario just west of Kingston and has been identified for significant wind farm development, both onshore and offshore; and

WHEREAS currently six (6) wind turbine development companies have publicly signaled a desired presence with three (3) applications in place at the formal planning application stage (1 of these at the Ontario Municipal Board); and

WHEREAS the need for renewable energy sources is recognized at the federal, provincial, municipal and local community levels; and

WHEREAS wind-generated power is an established source of renewable energy being created globally; and

WHEREAS populated and publicly owned and occupied lands and waters are being identified for industrial wind turbine development; and

WHEREAS discrepancy exists on the health effects potentially created by the presence of industrial wind turbines; and

WHEREAS this discrepancy on the potential health effects is proving to be destructive and divisive to the social and cultural fabric of rural communities; and

WHEREAS other Ontario municipalities, being the Township of Loyalist and the Township of Dawn-Euphemia, have passed resolutions expressing concern with the health effects association with wind turbines;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the County of Prince Edward requests that the Federal and Provincial government agencies responsible for public health, energy creation and energy management complete the following:

1. Dedicate resources to the necessary scientific research to consider the impact of
 - a) low frequency noise, and
 - b) electrical and electromagnetic disturbancesin areas of industrial wind turbines with the intent to confirm/deny public health implications; and
2. Create and provide authoritative regulations and guidelines for the locating of wind turbines to municipalities and wind energy developers;

THAT the resolution of the Township of Loyalist dated September 25, 2008 be supported; and

THAT this resolution be forwarded with a request for action to:

The Ontario Ministries of Health, Environment and Energy, Medical Officers of Health at Public Health Units, Environment Canada, Health Canada, All MPPs and MPs, The Premier's Office, The Prime Minister's Office, The Association for Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM); and

THAT this resolution be circulated to all municipalities and native territories in Ontario requesting their support."

On April 21, 2009, comments were filed by the Municipality with the Provincial Government identifying the following areas of concern regarding the then proposed Green Energy and Green Economy Act:

- Cumulative environmental, social and economic impact of renewable energy projects on the community
- Municipal Amenity Agreements
- Municipal Services Permits
- Independent analysis of natural environment and human health impacts of renewable energy projects.

At the Council meeting of June 23, 2009, Council passed the following motion:

"THAT Council invite written public input and hold a public meeting on the subject of Wind Energy Development in Prince Edward County to assist in the development of a Municipal Wind Energy Position Statement that would be used to assist in the implementation of the Green Energy Act and regulations."

On July 16, 2009, a Planning Staff Report identifying sixteen areas of concern, including the following, regarding the proposed GEA Regulations was considered by the Committee of the Whole:

- The use of municipal lands by independent power producers
- Project notice and appeal provisions
- Setbacks
- Limited municipal consultation (e.g. does not include financial impacts on local economy or impacts on natural/cultural landscapes)

At that Committee meeting, the following resolution was passed with the concerns identified filed with the Province on July 20, 2009:

"THAT the report of the Manager of Planning dated July 16, 2009 regarding the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources proposed Renewable Energy Project Requirement Regulations be received;

THAT the comments contained in Appendix 1 to this report be forwarded to the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources as the County of Prince Edward comments in regard to the proposed Regulations;

THAT the Province of Ontario be requested to address the matters in Appendix 1 in the final Regulations; and

THAT there be a request for a decommissioning plan for any renewable energy proposed over 3 kilowatts."

On July 16, Committee of the Whole also received a report from Planning Staff regarding the Green Alternative Plan (GAP) and a report from the Economic Development Officer dated July 16, 2009 regarding Industrial Wind Turbine Economic Impact Assessment, and passed the following resolutions:

"THAT the Ontario Premier, the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure and the Ontario Power Authority be requested to consider options to increase the amount of renewable energy produced from small-scale green technologies, including the three core components of GAP (homeowner loan program, small-scale renewable energy technologies, and net metering).

THAT the Green Alternative Plan be referred to the Economic Development Officer for review and a report as it relates to Economic Development.

THAT Council approve \$5,000 from the contingency reserve to fund a literature review and key information summary (outsourced to community volunteers and some paid assistance) and an Economic Development report offering a point of view and a Council recommendation regarding the economic impact of Industrial Wind Turbines; and

THAT the above report be submitted to the September 10, 2009 Committee of the Whole meeting."