



– FEBRUARY, 2011 –

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sustain This! Adapting to Climate Change can lead to a Resilient Windsor Essex

The Climate Change conference sponsored by the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee on February 11th at the Ambassador Auditorium was a complete success. Nearly 80 people attended the event and I received many positive comments about the speakers and workshops. Thank you to all WECEC members who helped out and attended the workshop! Conference materials will be posted on the WECEC website.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

1. Ojibway Shores Protection

The PSW subcommittee has continued to revise the letter being presented to council regarding the rezoning of City property adjacent to Ojibway Shores. We have sent the letter to CAO Helga Reidel.

I am still awaiting a response from the Windsor Essex Mobility Group about attending a meeting with the PSW subcommittee. The Windsor Essex Mobility Group will establish a local project office in the Windsor area in the second quarter of 2011.

2. EBR Submission

Information regarding EBR Policy Proposal #011-1329, *Draft Update of Ontario's Transit-Supportive Guidelines* has been reviewed by many members of the transportation subcommittee. A proposed submission will be presented to the WECEC at the March meeting and if accepted, will be submitted to the EBR before the closing date of March 15th.

IMPORTANT UPDATES AND INFORMATION

1. Government of Ontario Newsroom – Ontario Rules out Offshore Wind Projects

On February 11th the McGuinty government announced that Ontario is not proceeding with proposed offshore wind projects while further scientific research is conducted. Applications for offshore wind projects in the Feed-In-Tariff program will no longer be accepted and current applications will be suspended. Ontario remains committed to renewable energy. Renewable energy is a key part of our Open Ontario Plan to create clean energy jobs while improving air quality by closing coal-fired generation.

2. Government of Ontario Policy Proposals (www.ebr.gov.on.ca)

a. *Ontario Source Testing Code (version 3)*

The Ontario Source Testing Code provides a set of methods and procedures for the measurement of emissions of air contaminants from stationary sources when such emissions are required for determining compliance with the Environmental Protection Act and the Regulations thereunder.

This document is available for public comment until March 31st. To view the policy proposal, visit www.ebr.gov.on.ca. The EBR # is 011-1909.

3. Newspaper articles

a. Windsor Star – February 3rd: *Company's 'alternative' heating request horrifies Kingsville councilor*

A Kingsville company that's burning pellets made from Toronto garbage wants to add nine boilers to heat 170 acres of greenhouses.

REMASCO (Renewable Energy Management and Services Company) has started an environmental screening process with the Ministry of the Environment and expects to hold public meetings in mid February. The pilot project started in 2008. The company is seeking to add five more units at Southshore and put four units at Agriville Farms, a Road 2 greenhouse complex that is also part of the Mucci Group.

If the \$12-million project is allowed, it could be done over five or six years and would heat about 70 more acres of greenhouses, project manager Jim Gallant said Monday.

While the project meets guidelines for municipal solid waste incinerators, Gallant stressed the units are not incinerators but gasifiers. He said they could also be called pellet-fired boilers. He said the pellets are heated up to produce a gas of carbon monoxide and hydrogen which is burned in two stages so it can be used to heat water which is circulated through pipes to heat greenhouses.

Gallant said a health risk assessment has been done and will be available later on the company's website. He said the emissions don't smell, aren't black like emissions from other greenhouse stacks and are more environmentally friendly than greenhouses which use coal or bunker oil.

b. Windsor Star – February 3rd: *Planet could save trillions by switching to renewable energy: WWF*

The Energy Report, released by WWF International, a global conservation organization, said the plan not only provides sustainable development, but also prevents dangerous levels of global-warming causing pollution in the atmosphere.

Josh Laughren, WWF-Canada's director of climate and energy said the report demonstrates that the planet has no choice about switching to renewable energy since the supplies of cheap oil and gasoline from conventional sources are running out.

The study predicted that the investments would pay off by around 2040, based on other industry-accepted projections from organizations such as the International Energy Agency. But it also noted that

the payoff could come sooner when factoring in impacts of climate change as well as the pace of increases in the price of oil.

The report also recommends significant improvements in building codes to reduce heating costs as well as standards for every appliance or product on the market. It proposes major changes in public transportation, as well, favouring electric-powered vehicles such as high-speed trains, to reduce such energy-intensive modes as aviation.

- c. Montreal Gazette – February 8th: *Wanna lower grocery bill? Think climate-change solutions, researcher says*

Want another reason to care about what humans are doing to the environment? How about the cost of groceries?

Climate-change expert Thomas Pedersen, director of the B.C.-based Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, will lay out the latest changes our climate is facing during a free lecture in Montreal Tuesday. But his alarming message contains a touch of hope — provided people smarten up. "The changes we are seeing are profound and severe and all of this is the direct result of us, humans," Pedersen said from Vancouver Monday, while waiting to board an eastbound plane. "The price of food is at an all-time high and why is this happening? Extreme weather is impacting harvests."

Greenhouse gases, global warming and fluctuating water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean are driving weather systems.

Take a look at the last year: A punishing summer heat wave in Russia; Pakistan under water; and ruinous floods in Queensland, Australia. Pedersen said all had a catastrophic effect on wheat, rice and cane sugar supplies. "All of these events contribute to the price of food and even, to an extent, to political instability."

- d. Windsor Star – February 17th: *Windsor-Essex region urged to fight Great Lakes phosphorous Pollution*

The Essex region needs to double or triple efforts to reduce phosphorus pollution and algae blooms in Lake Erie, the area's watershed restoration director said Wednesday. That would mean doubling or tripling the \$400,000 that ERCA receives from the federal and provincial governments to plant trees and reduce nutrients heading into rivers and creeks.

Algae blooms, which raised concerns in the 1970s, have made a comeback in Lake Erie in the last decade. In the last two summers there have been algae problems on the lake and satellite images showed the western basin was green with algae. This time the phosphorus is coming from a number of sources, including fertilizers from lawns, agricultural run-off and faulty septic systems.

To reduce the phosphorus heading to the lake, residents should consider not fertilizing their lawns or using a fertilizer with less phosphorus and spreading less of it. In rural areas, the conservation authority works with landowners to reduce erosion by planting trees and grass along drains to reduce run-off. It also uses grants to encourage landowners to improve their septic systems.

TASKS FOR NEXT MONTH

1. Ojibway Shores Protection

I have contacted a representative from the Windsor Essex Mobility Group asking for a delegation to the WECEC regarding the environmental assessment of the Windsor-Essex Parkway. I will continue to make more contacts and follow-up to try and schedule a meeting with the WEMG.

2. Improve relationships with Essex County

As outlined in the Strategic Plan, meeting with each county municipality is mandated in order to identify potential environmental concerns to bring forward to the WECEC. I will begin to contact the county municipalities in order to fulfill this Strategic Plan requirement.