



– NOVEMBER, 2010 –

ONGOING INITIATIVES

1. Provincially Significant Wetlands

a. DRIC compensation properties

As discussed at the last ad-hoc meeting, the approach to obtaining Ojibway shores as compensation land for the DRIC project must start with the re-zoning of land surrounding the property. Currently, this land is zoned “Industrial Port”, and we would like this to change to “Natural Heritage”.

As advised by city clerk Valerie Critchley, the best way for WECEC to present to City Council regarding the re-zoning of property is to write a letter to council outlining the issue we would like to present. This will then be placed on Council Communications to be dealt with either by directing it to administration to bring back a report, by dealing with the request immediately, or by noting and filing the correspondence.

In addition, as requested by the ad-hoc committee, I invited Ministry of Transportation Project Manager Kevin DeVos to an ad-hoc committee meeting. I received a response from Kevin outlining the requirements for assessment and mitigation of the Ojibway Prairie Wetland Complex as specified in the Conditions of Approval for the Ontario Environmental Assessment. As the preferred bidder, WEMG (Windsor Essex Mobility Group) will be responsible for the development of a compensation plan for the wetland. As consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken by WEMG during future design stages, Kevin suggests that it would be best to discuss the PSW issue in the New Year. He will not be attending ad-hoc committee meetings.

b. Airport woodlots

The course of action discussed by the ad-hoc committee cannot proceed until the Airport Master Plan has been completed.

2. Protection of Ojibway Shores (video)

WECEC has received a quote from Axxess Design to film and edit a short video detailing damage occurring to the landscape in Black Oak and Ojibway shores from ATV and dirt bikes. The total price is \$293.80.

Should the Committee decide to film the Ojibway shores property, we must obtain approval from the Port Authority. Port Authority officials will likely want control over how their property is portrayed in the film as well as the film script. The Port Authority is concerned about misinterpretation of the film, and does not want the public to think that the property is not being taken care of.

3. Climate Change Workshop

The Ambassador Room as well as one break out room have been booked at the University from 9am-2pm on February 11th, 2011.

The following individuals and speakers have shown interest in our event:

Paul Sharbeno – energy consultant at EnergyAdvocate.ca and member of the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association

Health Canada

ICLEI – Local governments for sustainability

Environment Commission of Ontario

Bob Willard – Author: *The Sustainability Advantage, The Sustainability Champion's Guidebook*

The Natural Step

Quentin Chiotti – Climate science and adaptation consultant

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Chicago Department of the Environment

Victoria Rose – My Local Food (Windsor)

Speaker biographies, workshop budget, as well as other logistics will be presented at the December WECEC meeting.

4. Website

All website content has been added (with the exception of a couple biographies). Eliquid is still in the process of finalizing the website. Once this process is completed, I will meet with Eliquid and go through the website page-by-page to make sure everything is correct before it is launched.

5. Share the Road Application

WECEC is awaiting completion of the application by the Windsor Essex County Health Unit. Once complete, a copy will be sent to WECEC from Cathy Copot-Nepszy.

IMPORTANT UPDATES AND INFORMATION

1. Urban Chickens

As described in the Windsor Star articles below, on November 8th the debate to allow residents to raise backyard urban chickens was deferred indefinitely by City Council. This happened after council voted against the city licensing commission's recommendation to form a committee to study the issue.

This topic has been brought up again after Coun. Halberstadt issued a notice of motion (seconded by Coun. Hatfield) at the November 22nd council meeting. This motion suggested that council debate the chicken issue at its next meeting. It was decided that proponents of Windsor's urban chicken movement will present their case to council on January 24th, 2011. This debate will simply be to decide whether to form a committee to study the idea.

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

a. *Birds and Bird Habitats: Guidelines for Wind Power Projects (2010)*

The Green Energy Act 2009 places a priority on expanding Ontario's use of clean and renewable sources of energy, including wind power. A key element of the Act is a new integrated approval process that establishes clear up-front requirements for most renewable energy projects. These requirements are outlined under the Ministry of the Environment's (MOE) Renewable Energy Approval (REA) regulation (O.Reg. 359/09) and the Ministry of Natural Resource's (MNR) Approval and Permitting Requirements Document (APRD).

The REA regulation describes the requirements for wind power projects related to significant natural features, including significant wildlife habitat. Birds are an important part of Ontario's biodiversity. To provide further clarity and certainty on the renewable energy approval requirements for wind power, MNR has prepared updated Guidelines for application to both Crown and private lands.

The Guidelines support implementation of the Renewable Energy Approval regulation by establishing provincial guidance on identifying and addressing potential negative effects on birds and bird habitats during the planning, construction and operation of onshore wind power projects.

The Guidelines address the new requirements of the Renewable Energy Approval regulation, incorporate new North American science and information and provide guidance on identifying and addressing potential negative effects on birds and bird habitats during the planning, construction and operation of wind power projects.

This document is available for public comment until December 20th, 2010. To view the policy proposal, visit www.ebr.gov.on.ca. The EBR # is 011-0112.

b. *Environmental Noise Guideline - Noise Assessment Criteria for Stationary Sources and for Land Use Planning (Publication NPC-300)*

The proposed updated Environmental Noise Guideline defines the requirements and criteria used by the MOE when issuing approvals for noise from stationary sources (which includes most industrial-type equipment and activities that are noise sources). The types of approvals MOE issues for noise include

Certificates of Approval under section 9 of the *Environmental Protection Act* and Renewable Energy Approvals under section 47.3 of the *Environmental Protection Act*.

Additionally, the proposed updated Environmental Noise Guideline will provide advice concerning noise, which can be applied to land use-planning decisions made by land use planning approval authorities.

This document is available for public comment until January 15th, 2011. To view the policy proposal, visit www.ebr.gov.on.ca. The EBR # is 011-0597.

3. **Ventra Assembly Company**

This proposal is for the amendment to Certificate of Approval (Air) No. 2127-86ULTF, for Ventra Assembly Company, a division of Flex N Gate, located at 2755 Lauzon Parkway, Windsor, Ontario. The facility assembles and supplies front and rear fascia. The application is for the addition of one (1) adhesion promoter station.

Expected contaminants to the environment include epoxy resin, toluene and xylene.

This document is available for public comment until December 19th, 2010. To view the instrument proposal, visit www.ebr.gov.on.ca. The EBR # is 011-1719.

4. **WECEC Banner**

The WECEC banner has been reprinted by HCA Mindbox and will be available for display at the December meeting. Pauline and I are looking into developing a brochure to accompany the banner at public events. HCA Mindbox is able to design and print the brochures.

5. **Tecumseh Town Meeting**

A public meeting was held at Tecumseh Town Hall on Monday, November 8th. The meeting was held to gain public input on the new Official Plan which will begin to be developed. This 30 year plan is needed to articulate a clear, cohesive vision for the amalgamated Town. This vision should include the creation of a land use policy framework that guides community decisions based on a philosophy of healthy, liveable and sustainable communities. I attended the meeting upon request from the Town.

An overall presentation of the community profile and key planning issues was given. The Provincial Policy Statement as well as the County Official Plan were mentioned.

Many environmental considerations have been listed as key issues as the town develops including:

- Sustainable growth management
- Densification
- Protecting/adding natural heritage
- Urban design
- Transportation
- Parks and recreation
- Sustainability

Meeting attendees were split into working groups and brainstormed ideas to enhance the Official Plan. Discussion papers will be presented for public review as each of the key issues is looked into further. The public participation component of the plan will be strong and the direction looks to be very open minded, forward thinking, and takes many environmental sustainability issues into account.

6. Newspaper articles

a. Windsor Star – November 5th: *Team picked for \$1.6B Windsor-Essex Parkway project*

The \$1.6-billion Windsor-Essex Parkway passed a milestone Thursday with the selection of the consortium that will build the project and a provincial government promise to get a shovel in the ground by August.

Amico Infrastructure and Dillon Consulting are among the local firms involved in the consortium, Windsor Essex Mobility Group, led by a number of international all-star construction firms that includes ACS Infrastructure, Acciona Infrastructure and Fluor Canada Ltd.

Billed as the biggest road project in Ontario history, the border-feeding parkway promises to create 12,000 direct and indirect jobs over the lifetime of the project, which is expected to be completed in 2014.

Environmental work such as plant relocation and identifying locations of protected species is also already underway, with botanist and wildlife experts covering the grounds, especially near the protected Ojibway lands, he said.

b. Windsor Star – November 9th: *Windsor council rejects urban chicken concept*

Without a cluck of debate, city council on Monday voted to "defer indefinitely" further consideration of an end to Windsor's current ban on raising urban chickens.

CLUCK (Canadian Liberated Urban Chicken Klub) had been scheduled to appear as a delegation at the meeting, but Green said it bowed out after being advised that council's approval of a city licensing commission's recommendation to form a committee to study the issue was a mere formality.

Coun. Ron Jones, who chairs the licensing commission, voted in favour of the motion for indefinite deferral moved by Coun. Drew Dilkens. Fellow commission members Caroline Postma and Alan Halberstadt were among three councillors, including Percy Hatfield, who voted against the deferral, which passed 6-3 (Coun. Bill Marra was absent).

c. Power Worker's Union Editorial by Don MacKinnon: *Recycling existing generation stations is good for Ontario*

The decision to cancel the proposed Oakville natural gas generating station and community opposition to a proposed plant in York Region underscores the need for a different approach. Instead of forcing electricity plants on unreceptive communities, Ontario's first focus should be on recycling the valuable generating assets at Nanticoke, Lambton, Thunder Bay and Atikokan by converting them to new, cleaner fuel sources.

Recycling more than 6,000 megawatts (MW) of coal generation to be fuelled by natural gas and “Grown-in-Ontario” biomass can provide significant benefits to our electrical system, economy and environment.

Ontario is blessed with vast, renewable agricultural and forestry sourced biomass. Biomass is carbon neutral and can be used on its own or with fossil fuels to produce low-carbon electricity. Tests done by Ontario Power Generation (OPG) at Ontario’s coal-fuelled stations confirm the feasibility of converting the coal stations. It is important to note that, unlike wind and solar generation, renewable biomass generated electricity can be dispatched when most needed, not just when the wind blows and the sun shines.

North America needs long-term fuel diversity strategies that recognize abundant domestic coal resources. For example, the Ontario Power Authority noted in its 2005 Supply Mix Advice Report that lower-carbon coal gasification could be utilized at Ontario’s existing coal stations.

Ontario has no natural gas supplies of its own and is just one of many North American jurisdictions that are becoming much more reliant on the volatile natural gas market to generate electricity. Meanwhile, about 70 per cent of Ontarians heat their homes with natural gas. Carbon emitting natural gas generation has grown rapidly and now represents 28 per cent of Ontario’s electricity supply capacity and more is planned. Adding “Grown-in-Ontario” biomass as a carbon neutral, renewable fuel can help mitigate risk and ensure longer-term energy security.

Recycling Ontario’s coal stations to use natural gas and biomass means continued economic returns to the owners of these assets, the people of Ontario. The capital cost of converting these stations to dual-fuel is substantially lower than building new gas plants. For example, converting all eight Nanticoke units is estimated to cost 25 per cent less than the cancelled Oakville project, while producing an additional 2,250 MW of lower-carbon electricity for the province. In addition, existing transmission lines would continue to be used.

Unlike Oakville and York Region, community support for Ontario’s existing coal stations precludes NIMBYism or the need for intrusive regulations to force approvals for a new plant. The coal station host communities want the substantial economic benefits that come with retaining more than 1,000 highly skilled direct jobs, hundreds of secondary jobs, and millions of dollars in local purchases. They also want those who currently work at these facilities to remain an integral part of their communities.

The government recently announced conversion of the Atikokan station to biomass. This is a step in the right direction that will not only save a north-western Ontario community, it will also reduce Ontario’s carbon footprint, provide dispatchable, renewable electricity and create new jobs in the biomass supply chain.

Europe’s 2005 “Biomass Action Plan” calls for biomass to represent two-thirds of all their energy from renewable sources. This is estimated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 209 million tonnes, diversify their energy supply and create about 300,000 direct jobs. Both Germany and Denmark have retrofitted many of their fossil generating stations to use biomass with either coal or natural gas. Consumers have benefited from the recycling of existing generation facilities, fuel mix diversification, carbon emission reductions and job creation in the forestry, agricultural and transportation sectors.

To achieve similar benefits, our political leaders now need to focus on recycling Ontario’s ratepayer-owned Nanticoke, Lambton and Thunder Bay coal stations. Instead of forfeiting these valuable assets, Ontario should make them a key priority in its long-term energy plan.

d. Windsor Star - November 12th: *Solar Power takes root in Windsor and Essex County*

With temperatures peaking Thursday around 16 C under a cloudless sky, about 60 workers from Windsor's PCR Contractors and more than a dozen pieces of heavy equipment were reshaping hundreds of acres of land for the arrival of some 7,000 solar panels within a few months.

It's all surrounded by some 25,000 feet of barbed wire-topped fence to protect the \$130-million project near the intersection of North Side Road and Concession 2.

PCR's project manager Riko Soesanto welcomed the warm weather speeding construction this late in the year. He's optimistic about meeting a June 2011 completion date for California-based SunPower, the project developer.

The 20-megawatt SunPower solar farm in Amherstburg is the first of three -- and perhaps more -- rising in Essex County's sunny climate.

e. David Suzuki Foundation – November 17th: *Tell MPs and the Prime Minister to respect democracy and heed the will of Canadians*

Stephen Harper has done what he promised never to do: allow the Senate to go against the will of the majority of Members of Parliament and the Canadian public. On November 16, after a surprise vote and without any debate, unelected Conservative senators killed the Climate Change Accountability Act. The Act would have made government accountable for putting in place the solutions to reduce global warming emissions to safe levels – in line with targets that leading scientists say are necessary to avoid the devastating consequences of uncontrolled climate change. It was overwhelmingly supported by and passed in the elected House of Commons, thanks in part to the support of Canadians from across the country.

This decision by Conservative senators to avoid debate and call a snap vote shows disrespect for our democracy and for Canadians, who time and again have told our elected representatives that we want the federal government to act on the most serious threat facing our country and the world.

To email the Prime Minister and your Member of Parliament, visit <http://action.davidsuzuki.org/C-311>

f. Windsor Star – November 22nd: *Windsor council revives chicken debate*

Windsor's urban chicken movement will get its chance after all to argue for the legalization of backyard egg-laying after council voted Monday night to debate the issue Jan. 24.

The decision comes just two weeks after a council majority, without any public discussion, passed a motion by Coun. Drew Dilkens to defer the issue indefinitely.

Coun. Percy Hatfield added that the late-January debate will simply be to decide whether to form a committee to study the idea.

TASKS FOR NEXT MONTH

1. Provincially Significant Wetlands

Continue to develop and implement action plans for connecting the airport woodlots, protecting Ojibway Shores, and prioritizing DRIC compensation property. This will depend on what is decided at the December WECEC meeting.

If approved, I will begin to coordinate the production of a short film of Black Oak/Ojibway shores with Axxess design.

2. Climate Change Workshop

After the December WECEC meeting, I will formally book speakers approved by WECEC. I will then begin to work with speaker groups to determine topics and workshop outlines that will best achieve our desired event outcomes.

3. Website

I will meet with Eliquid to finalize the website before it is launched.

4. Solar Source

I will continue to await response (or follow up) from either Ross Beatty (Solar Source), Kerri Brock or Lia Vanbaalen (ESEI Group) to inquire about delivering a presentation to WECEC regarding the solar panel plant being built on airport property.