

“Public Open House”? Just another sham meeting.

On May 25th, AIM PowerGen, the wind turbine developer, held what they advertised as a “public open house” to invite community feedback on its study of the visual impact of 35-storey wind turbines on the landscapes of Grey Highlands. AIM called this a **“public consultation”** and said its study team would “be on hand **to answer any questions”**.

The newspaper notice given was less than one week and a mailed flyer was not provided to everyone affected by the project – particularly omitted were those living closest to the designated turbine sites.

Although the meeting is a municipal requirement, it was an obvious sham – designed more to intimidate people than to inform them. Fully-armed OPP officers were hired to keep order and two police cruisers were parked at the entrance to the “public open house”. As if two were insufficient, a third officer and cruiser arrived during the session. All this force to protect the organizers from a group of property owners who simply wanted a genuine two-way dialogue, per the invitation to attend.

Answers to legitimate questions were not forthcoming. Concerns about flashing red aviation lights, strobe and flicker effects were ignored or called irrelevant. Staff on hand to provide information were argumentative, uninformed about local conditions or concerns, and engaged in rude name calling.

When asked why real questions from those directly affected could not be answered, AIM’s Project Supervisor Jim Wilgar said “We are running this meeting as we see fit” and it “will be shut down unless we get away from this type of dialogue”. To justify the restrictive conditions placed on attendees, AIM staff referred to the meeting as “private”. What happened to “public” and “open” as advertised?

The displays provided were misleading and omitted key details – homes affected by turbines were not shown on maps, the photos were taken from distances well beyond (up to 2 km. from) where the turbines will actually be placed, many photos were not taken in Grey Highlands. And the list goes on. The images presented bordered on deceitful, if not fraudulent.

This is what AIM PowerGen calls a public consultation with residents whose lives, health and property investments will be dramatically impacted by the erection of 385 foot wind towers. Worse they are insulted, demeaned and intimidated.

Who can hold AIM PowerGen accountable to the residents of Grey Highlands? Certainly not the Municipality. Certainly not the Provincial government.
How about you? We need your support to continue this fight for our homes and our community. Ignore the spin and learn about the science of wind energy. Go to www.gwag.ca. Get involved before it’s too late.

**A public service message paid for by citizens who
seek to preserve the quality of living in Grey Highlands.**