

Presentation to Council Regarding “Algonquin Power Company Request to Use, Relocate and Encumber the Amherst Island Road System”.

John Harrison, on behalf of Association to Protect Amherst Island (APAI) and SaveAI

It is our belief that the Amherst Island road system is an important cultural heritage of the island. This applies not only to the delightful shore-line roads but also to the inner roads. The road system is virtually the same as when it was set out in the late 1700s and early 1800s when, successively, the island was the private estate of Sir John Johnson, a United Empire Loyalist and later owned by Irish landlords. A striking heritage feature of the roads is the beautiful dry stacked Irish stone fences dating back to the 1840s. They are the subject of restoration effort by the Women’s Institute and island volunteers.

I recommend to all Councillors a trip around the shoreline roads, along the Second Concession Road between the Stella and Emerald 40-Foot Roads, and especially a stop at the renovated dry stone wall at the intersection of the Second Concession Road with the Emerald 40-Foot Road. The trip is preferable on a bike.

Already we have lost many of our roadside trees and hedges; a result of elm disease and road widening. There needs to be no further loss.

For all of us the construction fiasco on Wolfe Island is an object lesson.

As most of you will know, the Wolfe Island roads and wetlands were treated with disdain by Canadian Hydro Developers during the construction of the wind energy generating system. Every turbine there needed over 60 loads of concrete and aggregate and the removal and relocation of a similar amount of soil for the foundation. For the behemoths proposed in the latest Stantec report, there will be even more loads per turbine on Amherst Island.



Artificial image but with height scaled for Siemens 2.3-113 turbine. (Brian Little)

On Wolfe Island, culverts were crushed, roadside ditches were filled, roads were flooded, trees were bulldozed out of the ground and out of the way, soil was

bulldozed into protected wetland, environmental barriers were neglected and wetlands were drained. Trucks idled outside homes while waiting to unload, there were continual complaints of traffic noise, speeding and dust.



Culverts were crushed, ditches were filled (Brian Little)



Roads were flooded (Wayne Gulden)



Trees were bulldozed out of the ground (Laurie Kilpatrick)



and again ... (Edward and Gail Kenney)



Ground Cover was bulldozed away (Laurie Kilpatrick)



and into wetlands (Wayne Gulden)



Aggregate was piled by the roads (BrianLittle)



Wetlands were partly drained (Edward and Gail Kenney)



Trees were removed (Brian Little)

A financial deal between the township and Canadian Hydro Developers left responsibility for road recovery to the township. Only this past year have the roads been brought to their original state. Trees have been planted but the mature trees have been replaced with metre high saplings. None of the replacement trees have been planted roadside.

Furthermore, given the noise and dust problems during the Wolfe Island construction, construction needs to be limited to the normal working day and dust prevention is a priority. In Ontario, dust from unpaved roads provides 130 times the particulate matter (PM2.5) in the atmosphere compared to coal plants.

All of this damage, and for what? The actual power provided by the project is two-thirds of that promised before construction. Amherst Island, in the wind shadow of Prince Edward County, will fare worse.

If this project on Amherst Island is to go ahead, the Company will need to be very closely supervised. Remember that these companies have no other motive than to make money. Examples of this are the development in Important Bird Areas, the request to the Ministry of Natural Resources for licence to kill endangered species at Ostrander Point, and the siting of turbines on Wolfe Island so that the 40 decibel noise contour brushed right up to residences with no regard for the fact that their predictions were subject to uncertainty.

The provincial government cares not one whit about full environmental assessments or follow-up investigations. We know that not only did the Ministry of the Environment ignore recommendations of their field officers, it suppressed those recommendations.

I do not believe that the Township has the resources to perform the necessary supervision. There needs to be a qualified professional engineering supervisor, acting under the direction of Loyalist Township, chosen by the Township, responsible to the Township and paid for by Algonquin Power. Given the fiasco that was the construction on Wolfe Island, I suggest that the Township look elsewhere for that supervision.

We see no reason why the Township should start this process anytime soon. Algonquin is a year away from getting approval under the Green Energy Act and should not be interfering with the roads until that approval has been granted. There are many reasons for believing that the project will not be approved. In my opinion, and with reason, the project makes no financial sense. The bird mortality on Wolfe Island has shocked naturalists far and wide; the adverse health effects are becoming undeniable; noise compliance testing is foreseeable; the damage to the island heritage is clear.

Therefore we strongly recommend to Council that it support Recommendation #1 of the Director of Engineering's report: Take no further action at this time.

Finally, if and when the time does come to discuss the road file with Algonquin Power, we ask that Council, through its staff, insist that all transmission lines be buried. This was the wish of the previous Council in the Official Plan Amendment submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.