



**CITY OF KINGSTON
RURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NO. 02-2012
MINUTES
TUESDAY, February 28th, 2012
6:00 P.M., INVISTA CENTRE, RONA ROOM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Sutherland; Chair
Councillor Reitzel
Councillor Scott
Mr. Piche
Mr. Tolls
Mr. Wolfe

OTHERS PRESENT

Approximately 80 members of the public

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Jannette Amini, Committee Clerk
Ms. Sonya Bolton, Senior Planner
Mr. Jim English, Pollution Prevention Specialist
Mr. Wally Ferris, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services
Ms. Cherie Mills, Manager, Policy Planning
Mr. James Thompson, Committee Clerk

THIS IS NOT A VERBATIM REPORT

PUBLIC MEETING

The Chair called the public meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. The Committee hosted a public meeting regarding landscaping and setbacks in relation to solar panel arrays.

Ms. Bolton conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Green Energy Act and Renewable Energy Products. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached to the original set of minutes located in the City Clerk's Department.

Ms. Mills addressed the public meeting process and noted that the comments received during the public meeting would form the basis of a staff report which will be brought before the Committee in the future.

Councillor Scott provided members of the Committee and public with additional background information regarding solar panel arrays.

Mr. Sewell, Unity Road Rate Payers Association, conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding setbacks and land use provisions. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached to the original set of minutes located in the Clerk's Department.

Mr. Richard Outman sought further explanation regarding the regulations associated with barriers and berms. Ms. Bolton replied that the developer determines what type of

barrier will surround the site. She indicated that the municipality is entitled to make suggestions regarding the design of the barrier or berm. She noted that each barrier or berm should be tailored to meet the needs of each specific site. Mr. Outman suggested that native species should be utilized when creating a barrier.

Ms. Katherine Outman mentioned that she lives across from a proposed solar panel array development. She stated that the developer has indicated that trees will be planted around the exterior of the site. She expressed concern that it will take several years for the trees to mature enough to provide coverage.

Ms. Janet Drew sought further explanation regarding the process that established the setback provisions for wind turbines. She stated that a similar process should occur to determine appropriate setbacks for solar panels. Ms. Bolton indicated that solar panel arrays and wind turbines are governed by different regulations. Ms. Drew suggested that the setbacks for solar panels should be similar to the setbacks for wind turbines.

Mr. Brian Bowers expressed concern that the proposed solar panel arrays may negatively impact the water supply. He questioned if research has been conducted regarding adequate setbacks.

Mr. Nicholas Veenendaal stated that he hopes the solar panel developments in the City of Kingston will not resemble the developments located nearby Napanee. He mentioned that he is also concerned that solar power arrays could negatively impact the water supply.

Mr. Gord Taylor, Unity Road Rate Payers Association, stated that mitigation efforts must include berms, vegetation and setbacks at a minimum. He commented that the minimum setback should be 550 meters. He mentioned that solar panel arrays should not be visible from Unity Road. He noted that he is not opposed to solar farms provided that they are located out of sight. He indicated that the City of Kingston should ensure that the water supply is protected.

Mr. Jim Elliot stated that he lives in close proximity to a quarry which has negatively impacted his water supply. He mentioned that the quarry is surrounded by a berm that is approximately 45 feet high. He noted that the quarry is setback approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from Unity Road. He suggested that the height of the berms should be limited to 15 feet or a few trees.

Mr. Richard DeWolfe commented that he owns a horse farm which is located beside a potential solar farm. He questioned if restrictions exist to limit blasting nearby livestock. He commented that the neighbouring property contains a cross drain and expressed concern regarding run off and drainage issues once the solar farm has been constructed. He stated that maximum setbacks should be required to protect his livestock. He noted that the berm should surround the entire property. Mr. DeWolfe stated that steps must be taken to ensure that endangered species are protected. Ms.

Bolton replied that the environmental impacts on wildlife are examined on a site specific basis. Mr. DeWolfe expressed concern regarding the impact of heavy equipment during the construction of the solar panel arrays.

Ms. Sewell stated that she is concerned about setbacks and suggested that the minimum setback should be 550 meters. She commented that berms should also be designed to appear natural.

Ms. Lisa Ilian stated that she believes the minimum setback should be 550 meters. She commented that solar panel arrays and wind turbines should be held to the same regulations. She mentioned that a berm should completely surround the site. She noted that berms should appear natural and provide coverage in all seasons.

Mr. Wolfe spoke to the difference between design standards and performance standards. He commented that the majority of the statements tonight have pertained to design standards. He noted that the Committee requires some input regarding performance standards as well.

Ms. Marian Archer stated that an eight foot chain link fence does not constitute a berm.

Mr. Ben Finley commented that Mr. Wolfe raised a very good point about performance standards. He commented that barriers should also provide protection from radiation. He noted that the water supply in the Unity Road area is very fragile.

Mr. Clark Ilian emphasized that the importance of ensuring that the quantity and quality of water is protected during this process.

Councillor Scott encouraged members of the public to address the design of buildings and any concerns associated with power lines.

Ms. Alison Slate stated that she is concerned that the radiation generated from the solar panel arrays will impact the health of children. She stated that the minimum setback should be 550 meters. She commented that she is also concerned about the high volumes of electricity travelling through the power lines. Ms. Alison stated that power lines and power stations should be located at least one kilometre away from residents. She mentioned that the design of berms is not a major issue provided that an appropriate setback is in place. She suggested that the berms be covered in vegetation. Ms. Slate indicated that residents should not see chain link fences or power lines. She stated that she is also concerned about solar panel arrays negatively impacting the water supply.

Mr. Brian Bowers commented that he believes setbacks should be site specific.

Ms. Pam Taylor suggested that ground cover be mandatory within the solar panel fields.

Mr. Taylor commented that he is appreciative of the Committee's efforts and requested that the City of Kingston request that the Provincial Government restore the municipalities zoning powers regarding this matter.

Mr. Doug Brown questioned if provisions are in place to ensure that land is returned to its original state once the project is completed.

Mr. Lance Norman referenced the correspondence he submitted which was included in the agenda. He stated that power stations should be contained within a building to mitigate noise.

Mr. Bernie Henderson spoke to the design of berms. He suggested that the berms be setback, built to a maximum height of three feet and be covered with grass. He mentioned that trees should also be planted on the berm. He stated that the site should be covered with grass. He mentioned that poplar and pine trees should be used to hide buildings.

Ms. Alison Slate stated that she would also like to see power lines travel along the Highway 401 corridor rather than along Unity Road or Mud Lake Road.

Mr. Sewell indicated that he has submitted several documents regarding this issue. He commented that he would be willing to sit on a technical committee. He stated that the concerns of the residents must be heard.

A member of the public suggested that the berm should be constructed prior to construction of the solar panel arrays.

Mr. Simon Kim, Samsung Renewable Energy Inc. stated that he is appreciative to have had an opportunity to hear the public's concerns. He mentioned that Samsung Renewable Energy is conducting extensive studies and will meet with the public once the aforementioned studies are completed.

The public meeting concluded at 7:40 p.m.

Mr. Sutherland provided members of the Committee with an opportunity to provide comment.

Councillor Scott indicated that consideration should be given to burying the power lines. He suggested that hedges be planted along rural roads. He commented that all buildings on the sites should look like they belong in the rural area.

Councillor Reitzel indicated that when the solar panel sites are decommissioned the land should be returned to its natural state. He commented that native species should be utilized when planting trees. He stated that a forested area should surround the solar farms.

Mr. Tolls indicated that consideration should be given to the protection of wildlife corridors.

Mr. Wolfe stated that the comments from the public demonstrate that the biggest concerns are maintaining the character of the rural area and protecting property values.

MEETING TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Reitzel
Seconded by Mr. Tolls

THAT the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Wolfe
Seconded by Mr. Piche

THAT approval of the Minutes of the Rural Advisory Committee Meeting No. 01-2012 held January 16th, 2012 be deferred to the next meeting.

CARRIED

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were none.

DELEGATIONS

There were none.

BRIEFINGS

There were none.

BUSINESS

a) Update regarding Bore Holes and Abandoned Wells

The Committee Clerk informed the Committee that Mr. Shea would arrange a meeting between Mr. Richmond and Mr. Wolfe regarding decommissioning the bore holes and abandoned wells.

MOTIONS

There were none.

NOTICES OF MOTION

There were none.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Wolfe mentioned that some of the issues on the committee's agenda are relatively narrow. He thinks that the Committee would like to take a more expansive view of its mandate, commenting on any issue where a rural perspective might be valuable. He also noted that the Committee should be asking Council to tell the province that the process of approval for projects like solar farms disadvantages rural residents as they must appear before multiple committees instead of having a single window where they could ask questions.

Mr. Sutherland commented that the Committee could consider drafting a motion to request that Council petition the Provincial Government to restore municipalities zoning powers with respect to solar farms.

Mr. Wolfe indicated that the Provincial Government must be made aware that this process does not adequately address the needs of residents. He commented that a clear process would lower tensions.

Councillor Scott mentioned that the Committee should be examining renaming Bur Brook road at a future meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Rural Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, April 11th, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Tolls

Seconded by Mr. Wolfe

THAT the Rural Advisory Committee do now adjourn.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.