

PRESENTATION – by Larry Towell On behalf of Sydenham Wind Concerns.

Dawn-Euphemia Township Council meeting Dec 1, 2008

Mayor Bilton and Township Council.

It has been almost 90 days since the wind developers submitted a request to amend the official plan and to re-zone the township to accommodate industrial wind turbines. Between 35 and 40 are slated for installation. A group of concerned citizens met a few days ago to articulate our suggestions, hoping you will consider them in the context of your vote. I found out only a day or two ago, that we actually have a bit longer, but I will pass on our thoughts tonight.

Twenty years ago, I attended a Euphemia Township Council meeting for the first time. I was curious about how things worked around here. Some of you were on council even back then. Mayor Bilton, you are still the mayor. Al Broad is still on council. I sat near the door beside your secretary, Marlene Klingbyle, chatting away, and you, Mayor Bilton, turned around in your chair and said to me, “It’s rare that any of the public ever comes to a council meeting. Nothing ever happens around here of interest.” Well, those were the good old days. The times they are a changin’.

On November 17, 2008, Mr. Mayor, you chaired a meeting attended by 200 people. Now, there’s only 2190 residents in this whole rural township, including babies, and the infirmed. We must reflect on that, because a couple of weeks ago, in Toronto, 1000 residents attended a wind turbine meeting. It was considered to be an historical turn out for Toronto. Remember, there are 3 million people in that city, so one person in 3000 showed up. For the first time in history, Dawn-Euphemia Township beat Toronto at the numbers game.

At our Nov 17 meeting, a couple of other numbers stuck in my mind. Dr Magda Havas, told us that, due the sorely inadequate suggested provincial setbacks of around 400 meters, the health of 70 of our 2190 residents will be “severely” affected, and 770 residents will be “moderately” affected. That’s a total of 840 people. Meaning, the health of well over 1/3 of our people will be impacted due to the proximity of industrial wind turbines to their homes.

At a township meeting a couple of weeks earlier, the wind developer acknowledged that the problems at the Ripley installation severely affected the health of 6 families, to the point where they had to move out of their homes. He also said that he felt this was an acceptable number. So my question to you is this: What actually is the acceptable number of people who should be allowed to suffer health problems related to the installation of industrial turbines? The answer for me is obvious. It’s “zero”. That’s the right answer. So we have a real problem here, because we’re not statistics.

So what seems to be missing, what is really missing in this scenario, is the voice of the people to the government. The bottom line is this...We need to prohibit wind developers, on the provincial level, from causing occurrences of stray voltage, poor power quality, and objectionable sound and low frequency vibration that causes residual health affects including: insomnia, headaches, earaches, anxiety, nose bleeds, memory loss, nausea, and dizziness, to mention a few. The problem is, we don't know exactly how to stop them because we are subject to a policy that enables.

As a group of concerned citizens, we're asking you to consider our requests:

1) First, put off the vote as long as possible because new information is coming every day and the clock is beginning to turn. The public is organizing. A month ago there were 22 separate concerned citizen's groups in Ontario. Today there are 29. Seven new groups have formed in a single month.

2) I know that you are considering this already, but this is also our first choice: Defer this decision until there is an independent provincial epidemiological study, because the MOE guidelines are horribly inadequate. They are actually the problem. The study must be independent. Dr. Greensmith, our county medical officer who also spoke on Nov. 12, reminded us that a health study must be subjected to a peer assessment process and published in scientific journals. No corporate spin with subsidies.

3) If negative affects are proven, we ask you to insist that the Ministry of Government Services implement a plan to eliminate objectionable electricity, sound, and vibration.

4) If you feel you do not need a health study, because enough is already scientifically understood and proven, then, as Dr. Havas pointed out, all you really need to do is act. So if you change the official plan and re-zone this township, we ask you to regard these conditions:

a) Bury all cables. We are not guinea pigs

b) Setbacks - Current setbacks are not adequate. They're irrelevant. They were not designed for today's turbines. We ask council also not to allow the wind farm developers to establish our setbacks based on what they will accept before threatening to take you to the OMB. This is not responsible govt. So we are asking for a 2-kilometer buffer zone from homes, because:

- The setback in France is a "minimum" of 1.5 kilometers as suggested by the French National Academy of Medicine.
- In Germany it's 1.9 km.
- England's environmental groups have recommended a 2 km buffer zone.
- Dr. Havas suggested 2 kilometers based on Dr. Nina Pierpont's current research.
- Our speaker tonight, Dr. Bill Palmer, stated that 2 kilometers would be safe.

- Dr. Gordon Whitehead, a Canadian audiologist & adjunct professor, in a recent essay addressing setbacks, concludes: “Enforce a setback of at least 2 kilometers, and watch the majority of problems disappear. The solution is so simple!”

5) We want you to establish a time frame whereby wind developers must respond to complaints about health affects, to require an investigation of complaints, and if an investigation shows that the installation is responsible for the occurrence, the developer is required to implement the remedy, including dismantling of the turbine(s) if necessary.

6) In the case of stray voltage, the wind developer must be required to prove that the occurrence is not the installation’s fault. The onus should not be on the resident to prove that it is. Farmers are going broke fighting the corporations. They sell their herds to pay electricity specialists and lawyers. Put simply-- If there was no problem before, then the problem obviously wasn’t there before.

7) We want you to create an offense and a penalty for failing to remedy the problem in a timely manner.

8) We want you to oblige the wind developer to buy liability insurance so there is compensation.

9) Finally, we would like a citizen’s group to be able to participate in the decision-making process and agreements.

I’ve learned a lot at these township council meetings over the past couple of months. I think we all have, and I want to thank you for your transparency and your accountability.

Larry Towell
Resident of Dawn Emphemia Township