

Wind Turbines in Bluewater

1. Discussion and Debate since 2007

- Early Discussions led by Planning Department
- Local and Worldwide Debate on the Importance and Value of Wind Energy: Demand for Power, Economics, Efficiency, Costs, Global Warming and Greening, Effects on Wildlife, Land Use, Settlement Patterns in Different Countries, Offshore Turbines, Scenic Impairment
- BSRA Board's Position: Support Wind Energy but with Appropriate Turbine Set-Back Distances



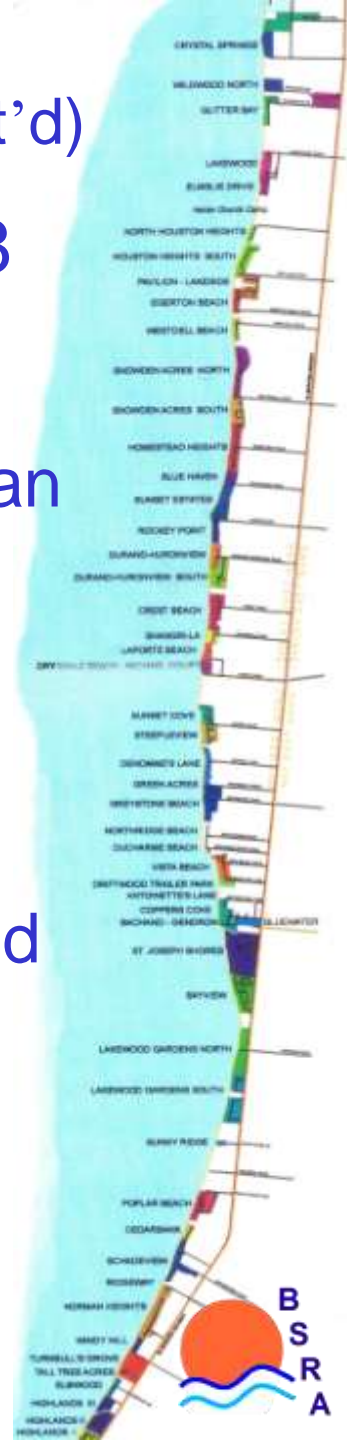
Wind Turbines in Bluewater (cont'd)

2. Bluewater Council's By-Law January 2008

- Compromise Motion Approved: 6 to 4
 - Set-Backs 1,000 meters east of highway 21, 1,000 from villages, 600 from other urban zones, 1,500 from ends of airstrips, none west of #21

3. Subsequent Debate/Discussion

- Widespread Media Reports on Health Hazards: Turbine Sound and Vibrations
- Reports of Concerned Citizens in Ontario and Europe: Queens Park Demonstrations, Meetings in Scarborough, Margaret Wentz article, www.windconcernsontario.com, www.epaw.com



Wind Turbines in Bluewater (cont'd)

4. Green Energy Act

- NIMBY Argument and Premier's Comments
- BSRA Letter to MPP April 26, 2009
- Act Passed Third Reading May 15 (59 to 13)
- > Expected to attract investment, stimulate economy, create jobs, encourage some smaller energy projects, and raise costs of electricity
- > Wind Energy Projects will be Fast-Track
- > Province will Overrule Local By-laws
- > Requirements of Ontario Planning Act and Environmental Assessment Act can be ignored



Wind Turbines in Bluewater (cont'd)

4. Green Energy Act

- Setback Distances Yet to be Determined
 - > MoE recommends 400 meters from houses
 - > Energy Minister suggested 500 meters
 - > Minister will fund an academic research chair to examine potential public health impacts
 - > Dr. Robert McMurty (former dean of medicine UWO) recommends 1,500 meters until scientific health study is completed.

Next?



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6. June 18 Response in Huron East: “HEAT”

- Seaforth Community Meeting – 400+ residents attended, all opposed to the proposed Wind Farm proposal for nearby St. Columban
- Reports from electrical engineer (“dirty electricity”), from nationally renowned independent pharmacist (“wind turbine disease worldwide”), and victim impact statements from 5 residents affected by the wind farm near Ripley (“Sounds ranging from a low swish to the sound of jets taking off” as well as low vibrations)

“You won’t be able to sleep at night if your windows are open”



Wind Turbines in Bluewater – August 2009

6. June 18 Response in Huron East: “HEAT” (cont'd)

- Later in June, Huron East Council passed an Interim Control By-law stopping the St. Columban Wind Projects pending the conclusion of a study or the passing of the Green Energy Act.
- Many residents sent responses objecting to the GEA’s proposed regulations. So did some BSRA Board members.
- Huron East community has contributed \$45,000 to Heat to help pay for legal expenses, advertising and printing.



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7. Green Energy Act Proposed Regulations

- Wind energy is only one of many components to the Green Energy Act. It also encourages solar, waterpower, biomass, biogas, landfill gas.
- Wind turbines to be set back 550 metres from the nearest dwelling, with setbacks increasing as the number of turbines increases (550 metres for a 1 to 5 turbine farm, 1.5 km for 15+ turbines)
- Setbacks also dependent on noise (140 db at point of reception) and low frequency vibration considerations
- These setbacks are reportedly twice as big as what wind energy officials were expecting.



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7. Green Energy Act Proposed Regulations(cont'd)

- Dr. McMurtry said the proposed regulations are definitely an improvement.
- Minimum 120 metre setback from shorelines and natural heritage features
- Turbines must be at least their height plus blade length from all roads and property lines
- Setbacks will affect 48% of the proposed projects
- Government has been criticized in Macleans (August 17) as “flying by the seat of its pants when it comes to energy”. (Trying to appeal to both the energy companies and the local citizens who object to wind farms close by)



Wind Turbines in Bluewater – August 2009

8. Current Situation

- Macleans article August 17 says Ontario is North America's friendliest jurisdiction for wind and other renewable energy projects
- Federal government reduced its subsidy in the last budget
- Community consultations and public input in June and July appear to have emphasized adverse health effects as well as effects on wildlife, transmission line problems, and low level vibrations



Wind Turbines in Bluewater – August 2009

8. Current Situation (cont'd)

- Sleep deprivation appears to be the biggest issue
- Many people believe that a serious epidemiological study is required.
- Many also doubt that wind power can fill significant portions of the provincial needs – because the wind does not always blow at the right times.
- We await the decisions of the Provincial government

