

Lynn Stein...provided
at meeting Sept 29th

Deputation to Council For September 29th 2009

Good evening to the Mayor, members of the council, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Lynn Stein and I work with my husband James Hartford, with RE/MAX Hallmark Realty.

I am here this evening as a resident of Prince Edward County and as a local professional real estate salesperson. My family and I live on North Big Island Road in Sophiasburgh.

I, and Elizabeth Crombie, of Royal LePage Proalliance, who joins me here this evening, as well as some other local Realtors, are very concerned about the placing of industrial wind turbines in Prince Edward County and we are already feeling the negative effect that will have on the desirability and value of homes and property here.

One of the most basic rules of property appraisal deals with locational obsolescence. Land fill sites, heavy industry, hydro or rail corridors would all be examples. Wind turbines are a locational obsolescence.

Our beautiful views, quiet pastoral surroundings, uninterrupted starlit night skies, are desirable things, and so people pay more for this. Surroundings are a large factor in establishing the value of a property.

Locational Obsolescence according to the Ontario Real Estate Association is

"The loss in value that a structure incurs as a result of negative environmental forces beyond the boundaries of the property."

In the Economic Development Impact Assessment recently completed and presented to Council, it states potential lost revenues from local businesses and the municipal tax base of up to \$40 million. This is a staggering risk.

One of the causes of this, stated in the report, and I quote, is

"Uncertainty-

Investors do not like uncertainty. The fact that Industrial Wind Turbines Energy Development projects could go just about anywhere in Prince Edward County could easily chase potential investment away. We know this is already happening with housing which is one form of investment in our community and business investment is next if it is not already happening."

We, the Realtors and you, the Sellers of property, must disclose any knowledge of a proposed development that could impact a buyer's decision to purchase.

As stated by a local Realtor,

"I just wanted to let you know that I seem to have lost yet another potential sale, to a couple who were considering buying a waterfront lot near little Bluff. I disclosed the map of wind energy projects and that was the end of their search here in The County.....this is the third occasion....I also understand it's happened with (another agent) here in our office as well. ..."

We find frequently that Buyers do not want to live near turbines. In some cases, Buyers for both homes and those looking to start a business, have decided to simply "give The County a miss," and look elsewhere, because they don't want to look at them or hear them, or jeopardize their investment or their health.

View adds value to rural property. Take away the view and you take away the value. The noise takes away the value. In some cases it renders the property unsaleable, and for those who experience health issues, it makes the home unliveable.

Mark Pniewski of RE/MAX writes of his experience in a community that already has them:

"... one example... on a property near Caledon, Ontario...a newer rural home lost more than 40% of its value after the construction of the wind turbine....Despite the discounted price my clients decided to withdraw their offer and the house stayed on the market unsold only to be rented out later by the vendor."

Chris Hazelton Royal LePage writes

"This will have a major impact on the local economy in general...I believe there should be a moratorium...until the long term health effects and economic impact...have been thoroughly investigated"

There are many letters from Realtors and homeowners, expressing concerns from health to economy to dismay at the destruction of their own property values. Many have declined to have their names publicized out of concern for their relationships in the community.

A woman on Big Island who experienced health problems on her short visit to Wolfe Island, fears she may have to move if these turbines are installed.

Kaitlin Group, a large and reputable builder with plans to invest here in The County, became aware of the potential of wind turbines in the summer of this year. He writes....

"The spectre of these installations...causes me great concern. The health impacts of these turbines are not yet fully understood, and the incompatible aesthetics in such close proximity to the urban areas does not seem logical. I fear that the potential of these installations would be considerable detriment to our project which is poised to bring the benefits of growth and economic stimulus to The County. Furthermore, the presence of the turbines would be counter-productive in an area that draws so heavily on its serene and pastoral landscape to support its tourism industries...."

And most telling is the man who sold his property very recently on Big Island.

"There is too much risk in Prince Edward County right now. Perhaps they don't build now ... or decide that Big Island is not right for turbines. But if I build my home I'm exposed. I'm in a situation I don't want to be. Better to cut my losses now."
(from the Wellington Times August 19th 2009.)

The building project was cancelled.

There are a number of studies that have been done in areas that have had the experience of having these 400 foot tall wind turbines installed in their midst.

One such study states that

(can be downloaded at <http://www.cwestonline.org/downloads/0008-AGO-WIND-TURBINE-IMPACT-STUDY.pdf>)

- 1) within the wind turbine influence area, properties sold for less than those outside the area
- 2) there were substantially fewer sales within the turbine influence area than outside it
- 3) the impact of the wind turbines decreased land values anywhere from 19% to 74% with an average of negative 40% values at one of the wind farms and an average of 30% at another.

The loss of property values will have a huge impact on all the business that rely on home building, improvement, landscaping, and the business of daily living. There will be many jobs lost, and businesses unable to expand. These are businesses that support the people who live here and provide employment for the future.

There is also **The Right to Quiet Enjoyment** of your property. We cannot do things on our land that negatively impact our neighbours or our community. We have laws that prevent that. The large turbines will impact the neighbours and the community.

To have been given the opportunity that all of us have, to live in this very special place, is truly a blessing. To have been born here, or to have chosen this place, we are all most fortunate.

To have this special place altered for all time with Industrial Wind Turbine structures would be terribly wrong.

This is a pristine place on the planet to be saved for the future generations to enjoy. This decision is one of the most important ever made in Prince Edward county. We all need to take time to learn and discuss and understand the consequences.

We urge the council to consider the consequences. We urge you to protect The County and to resist the inappropriate placement of Industrial Wind Turbines.

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