

Folly Lake Wentworth Environmental Protection Society REQUESTING A JUDICIAL REVIEW

Responding to the provincial government's Environmental Assessment decision released May 4, 2023, the Protect Wentworth Valley (PWV), a committee of the Folly Lake Wentworth Environmental Protection Society (FLWEPS) is fighting back requesting a judicial review to challenge the decision.

"We did not want to go this route," said Heather Johnson, a member of Protect Wentworth Valley, adding "but the minister's decision left us no option. We feel citizen concerns have not been heard or acknowledged over the past three years. We were basically dismissed. On behalf of this project and for our fellow Nova Scotians, we believe it is critically important to set the standard for meaningful dialogue with the province for future wind development in the province versus the current ad hoc consultation approach. The current system is deeply flawed."

Johnson, is one of many volunteers supporting the Folly Lake Wentworth Environmental Protection Society which was officially

formed in 2007 to organize a voice for community interests and to provide information regarding the Higgins/Stevens Wind Project. In 2020 a sub committee now known as Protect Wentworth Valley (PWV) was formed with the continued mandate to protect the ecology, biodiversity and recreational integrity of the Wentworth Valley.

The Protect Wentworth Valley judicial challenge is anchored in unprecedented submissions of over 187 comments and concerns from the public (with only six considered favorable). Additionally, while speaking at a February 2023 public meeting Minister Tory Rushton disclosed that his office received over 1,700 letters opposing the project. The Minister failed to adequately address the project's impact on the endangered Mainland Moose and the community's use of the area for outdoor recreation and eco-tourism.

Seeing this process as a test case for future developments in Nova Scotia, Protect Wentworth Valley advocates are pressing the government to more clearly

establish EA guidelines and hold applicants to the highest standards of accountability as the province considers further development of industrial wind farms.

Kent Rd. Housing Project Revised

A revised application for development of a 14 acre site on Kent Road was presented to Council Committee on June 8th by Pam Macintosh Paul Smith Scott Fraser.

The original application was submitted by the planning consulting company, Brighter Community, on behalf of the property owner, Metro Premier Properties Inc., in May of 2022, seeking consideration of higher density residential development on this 14 acre property on Kent Road.

It was proposing a mix of semi-detached, multi-unit townhouses and apartments, for a total of 358 units.

A revised application was received in May of 2023, proposing 30, semi-detached lots (60 units in total) and three apartment buildings, with 60 units in each building (180 units in total). The overall total of proposed new units is 240.

The current zoning, R-2, allows for the thirty semi-detached lots to proceed under the Central Colchester Land Use

By-law and Colchester Subdivision By-law and the property owner has a Tentative Subdivision application in currently.

For apartment buildings to be constructed at this location, the Municipal Planning Strategy would have to be amended to allow high density residential uses in this area. Only low density residential are permitted now.

The first step of this process is to hold a Public Information meeting with the Planning Advisory Committee to allow the neighbourhood to review and better understand this proposal. Once a meeting date is set, letters will be sent to property owners advising them of the date, time, and location of the meeting.

The applicants have submitted a Traffic Impact Study to NS Public Works and have employed a consulting firm to provide hydrogeological services as required through NS Environment when using groundwater for a potable water supply.

rooms) can be constructed for \$200,000 - \$250,000.

Modular Units (Duplexes, Multi-Units, Shared Living Units and Multi-Storey Apartment Buildings) can provide units of 400, 600 or 800 sq. ft. The target price for a 600 sq. ft. 1 bedroom/1 bathroom is \$100,000 - \$150,000.

Rental unit pricing would be set below market rate and The Shaw Group would strive to improve upon the 30% of income threshold for affordability.

The Pocket Community concept provides Debert employers with the opportunity to purchase a pocket property and offer rental housing to new employees.

Other options for continued ownership include a condo set-up or leasing options through Shaw Group, private ownership or a non-profit. The Shaw Group indicated they would be open to working with a non-profit to provide affordable subsidized housing within the Hudson property.

The Pocket Communities prioritize sustainable development via energy efficient design of amenities in the home (LED lighting, energy star appliances, low flush toilets, energy efficient windows, improved insulation products, etc.). By nature of design, the units have a small energy footprint and community layout encourages active transportation and shared amenities.

The Shaw Group did not specifically identify the required government incentives for the project but indicated their ask would be determined once infrastructure costs to support the project were finalized (land cost, road construction, site work, servicing).

If successful in their submission, The Shaw Group has requested they develop a test Pocket Community (11-12 units) to determine the market uptake on their product.

At this point, staff have requested that The Shaw Group develop a master plan for the 40-acre piece of land on Hudson Street, comprised of multiple pocket communities, supplemented with multi-units and multi-storey apartment buildings.

Once complete, this masterplan will be brought back to Council for discussion and consideration.

HOUSING, May 2023

UPDATE:

Debert Housing Project

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gave preference to submissions that prioritized affordable housing and sustainable development.

All proponents were required to attend an information session to review the scope and objectives of the EOI. The session had nine participants, however only two EOI submissions were received.

Feedback was provided from two developers indicating they did not submit a proposal for the following reasons:

- They felt they did not have adequate resources to take on the project, and the construction work force was limited in the Colchester region.
- The parameters for affordability were unrealistic in today's housing market.
- Based on the evaluation criteria, one submission (The Shaw Group) scored much higher than the other and proposed a housing concept that aligned with Council's goals for the Debert Housing Project.
- The Shaw Group is proposing an efficient use of land through the development of "Pocket Communities". Pocket Communities are small, efficient homes, grouped at a high density (11-12 homes per 2.5-3 acres) and offered shared-use amenities such as parking, playgrounds, vegetable gardens, bike storage, etc.
- The Pocket Communities are either comprised of 850 sq. ft. (2 bedroom, 1 bath) single-family units, or modular duplexes ranging from 400 sq. ft - 1200 sq. ft. These units offer 1-3-bedroom options. Both units can be offered as rentals or condominiums.
- To prioritize affordability, The Shaw Group is proposing development of Hybrid Homes, and Modular Duplexes.

The Hybrid Home is an on-site constructed home, in a module format allowing for nonskilled workers to complete 85% of the construction. The smaller footprint home (850 sq. ft & 1-2 bed-

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

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Government Seeks Community Partner

The Province is looking for a community-based organization to help design and deliver grief, bereavement and emotional wellness supports in northern Nova Scotia, as recommended in the Mass Casualty Commission's final report.

The successful organization will work with the government, Nova Scotia Health, other health system partners and community-based service providers to co-ordinate the delivery of grief, bereavement and emotional wellness supports.

For the first year, the work will focus on the Cumberland, Colchester and East Hants communities most impacted by the mass casualty, expanding across the province over the following year.

Interested community-based organizations will be able to attend webinars to review grant materials and have until August 25 to submit proposals. The grant is expected to be awarded in the fall. The agreement is valued at up to \$800,000 in the first year and up to \$1.5 million in the second.

Work is also underway to identify a partner to support an ongoing needs assessment and program evaluation.

Applications Open for Development Fund

Nova Scotians will continue to benefit from community-based projects that spark innovation and build stronger, more collaborative regions, through investments from the Community Economic Development Fund.

The fund, now open for applications, supports projects that foster economic development and growth; increase innovation, productivity and competitiveness; and prioritize both the economic and social well-being of communities.

Industry organizations, regional associations and other community-based organizations that benefit the public can apply for funding.

Applications will be accepted until August 31, and the fund will open to applications again in December. Starting in 2024, the fund will have three rounds of applications per year.

Premier Houston Becomes Chair

The Council of the Federation's two-day summer meeting ended July 12, in Winnipeg. Canada's premiers discussed ways to seize future economic opportunities through environmental stewardship, improving competitiveness and sustainable growth. The premiers focused on priorities that include Canada-United States relations and trade; developing strategic infrastructure, including trade corridors; transportation and supply chains; energy security; and climate action.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Premier Tim Houston became Chair of the council. "I am looking forward to advancing the issues that matter most to Nova Scotians over the next year," said Premier Houston. "I also look forward to welcoming my fellow premiers to the province this fall for a health summit and next year as we work together to create opportunities for all Canadians."

Grants for Improving Accessibility

The Province is helping community facilities and businesses make necessary upgrades to improve accessibility. Ninety-six projects are receiving a combined \$1.5 million through the Business ACCESS-ability Grant Program and the Community ACCESS-ability Grant Program. Both programs provide up to two-thirds of the costs of improvements; Business ACCESS-Ability will have a second round of applications with a deadline of September 29; applications for next year's Community ACCESS-Ability grants will open in the fall; and eligible groups include non-profit organizations, museums, post secondary schools, libraries, hospital, towns, villages and municipalities. The Province's accessibility strategy, Access by Design 2030, outlines how government will achieve its goal of an accessible province by providing people with disabilities equitable access to programs, services, information and infrastructure. More information on the Business ACCESS-Ability Grant Program and the list of 2023-24 recipients are available at: <https://cch.novascotia.ca/business-access-ability-grant-program>. More information on the Community ACCESS-Ability Program and the list of 2023-24 recipients are available at: <https://cch.novascotia.ca/investing-our-future/community-funding-and-awards/community-access-ability-program>

A special message for Grassroots / Volunteer Organizations

The Shoreline Journal has always wanted to help promote Grassroot / Volunteer / Community groups or organizations by publishing events, meeting notices, news, then publishing photos and event results FREE of CHARGE.

Two things have been devastating for our favourite groups: First it was CoVid-19, then as some print media were feeling the serious economic strain, SaltWire with many publications stopped home delivery and corner store availability of their papers on November 28th other than Truro, Bible Hill, Stewiacke Brookfield, Tatamagouche and Springhill. That leaves thousands with no opportunity to buy a paper.

As a result the Shoreline Journal and South Cumberland News is the only print media available in all rural communities within our coverage area. We are available at upwards of 30 corner stores and small business. If you purchase a subscription, we will mail a copy every month via Canada Post.

We wish to increase our importance to residents by including more news and events about community groups from the area and to help all groups reach our rural neighbours.

Contact: Maurice Rees, publisher to discuss: ongoing coverage of your group; publicize your events.

Yes, we can even discuss organizing a Fund Raising Project. Invite me and I'll attend one of your meetings to discuss with the membership how we can work together for your group's benefit.

The Shoreline Journal

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