



# Township of North Frontenac

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June 11, 2015

Kathleen Wynne, Premier  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier:

On June 10, 2015 the Council of the Township of North Frontenac met to discuss a request from NextEra Energy Canada to provide municipal support for two industrial wind turbine projects in the Township of North Frontenac. The two projects are named Northpoint I for up to 50 wind turbines and a transmission line in the Township of North Frontenac and Northpoint II for up to 100 wind turbines with 7 in the Township of North Frontenac and the remainder in the Township of Addington Highlands and a transmission line in the Township of North Frontenac connecting Northpoint II to Northpoint I.

The short term benefits could have been short term employment for North Frontenac residents and local companies for construction. We would also acquire added tax revenue, and if we had provided support for the projects the Proponent would have provided a Community Vibrancy Fund of about \$160K per year. Now that we have decided not to support this project we have lost out on the potential Community Vibrancy Fund if this project still proceeds without our support, as it could based on the *Green Energy Act* and a successful bid by the Proponent.

The Township of North Frontenac should have been notified by the Ministry of Energy about this project long before now and not have had to find out about such projects through a newspaper article in March of this year. Based on the fact that we never heard about this project until March we were put at a distinct disadvantage to ensure we understood all the facts with these two projects. In March we were told we would only have to provide support for one project that being Northpoint I. On June 6<sup>th</sup> we were informed we will now have a portion of the Northpoint II wind turbines in the Township of North Frontenac and an added transmission line.

For the last month North Frontenac Council's total focus has been on understanding everything it could in a relatively short time. There is a significant amount of information to digest and to try and determine what is fact and what is not is a daunting task.

### From Our Strategic Plan

The Township of North Frontenac is a 1,164.73 square kilometer lower-tier municipality, part of the County of Frontenac, and home to over 1,842 permanent residents (and 7,000+ seasonal residents). The low density of the population (1.7 people per square kilometer) makes for the preservation of an amazing landscape. Also, the Township of North Frontenac is beautifully set in the heart of eastern Ontario's cottage country in the Land O' Lakes Region. For these reasons it one of the best destinations for outdoor activities and relaxing living in southeastern Ontario.

Cottages and campsites dot the shores of the Township's many clean lakes. Our expansive, natural, and undisturbed wilderness boasts infinite opportunities for outdoor recreation. Located entirely on the Canadian Shield, the landscape can be rough, but at the same time provide for scenic backdrops and vistas. The natural beauty, wildlife, outdoor activities and the tranquility of the Township of North Frontenac is what most residents and visitors love about the area.

The Township of North Frontenac has the darkest skies in southern Ontario and we are easily reached by millions of potential visitors from Southern Ontario, Eastern Quebec and Northern New York. In addition to providing education and information we will have public star gazing nights with the assistance of expert astronomers and Astro-photographers.

**Our Mission** "The Township of North Frontenac's mission is the effective, efficient and sustainable delivery of services to its citizens."

**Our Vision** "The Township of North Frontenac will preserve our unique and pristine natural environment to promote a strong and resilient rural community."

### Considerations

Council of the Township of North Frontenac considered the following before reaching a conclusion on whether to support these projects or not:

- Economic benefit.
- Massive Road system.
- Deforestation.
- Loss of scenery.
- Loss of wildlife.
- Potential for wind turbine fires.

- Devaluation of property – already started for those trying to sell.
- Decommissioning of towers after life expectancy - \$450K - \$1M costs per turbine.
- Residential infighting and splits in the community with the “for” and “not for” proponents.
- Majority of residents are opposed ~ 86% based on a documented lake association survey and communications to the township from our residents either for or against the project favoured those against by a large margin.
- Does not meet our strategic vision or our direction/intent for economic development and resident attraction.
- Negative impact to our dark sky preserve; a unique environmental resource we can boast to be the first municipality in Canada to be designated a Dark Sky Preserve by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.
- Does Ontario really need this type of power generation?

### Resolution Rationale

The Council of the Township of North Frontenac has passed the attached resolution based on the following:

- True representation of those who elected us to office.
- The key issues for the Township and its residents are;
  - Devalued property
  - Loss of our pristine landscape
  - Environmental and wildlife impact
  - Health
- The vast majority of residents who voted us onto Council to represent them are not in favour.
- The project does not fit with our Vision statement for the Township of North Frontenac.
- There are too many unknowns about this project.

As an “unwilling host” of industrial wind turbines it is our intent to continue to be diligent on these two projects and do everything within our power to ensure industrial wind turbines are never constructed in the Township of North Frontenac. We have a vision and strategy for economic development and to put this type of project in our Township would destroy our community spirit, our plans and the natural beauty that makes us unique and proud of what we have.

The challenge of our municipality and other municipalities in Ontario is to be fiscally responsible while trying to manage the downloaded services being put on our shoulders. To that end the temptation of increased taxes and the community vibrancy fund was tempting. But when you actually analyze the long term impact of industrial wind turbines what we would have given up would not do any favours for our current residents and visitors, our future generation, our Township or for our future Councils. In addition we feel the Green Energy Act should be discarded or at the very least rewritten to restore the rights of a Municipality. The potential that this could still go ahead even after we do not support this, and are an unwilling host is not true democracy.

We implore the Premier of Ontario and Minister of Energy to take this resolution and similar resolutions from other municipalities very seriously. Like us you were elected to office to set policy and support the people who put you in these positions. If the policy is flawed, as it is in this case, then fix it. The Government of Ontario has stated they are going to provide more focussed support for rural municipalities. The support you can give us now is by supporting our resolution which would help us stay focussed on our strategic direction and our vision. It may take us longer to accomplish our goals rather than accepting this temptation put in front of us today, but we will be a much better and sustainable community long into the future.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ron Higgins  
Mayor, Township of North Frontenac

- c.c. Minister of the Environment
- Minister of Energy
- Minister of Natural Resources
- Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Randy Hillier, MPP
- Board of Directors of the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)
- Council of the County of Frontenac
- Council of the Township of Lanark Highlands
- Council of the Township of Greater Madawaska
- Council of the Township of Addington Highlands
- Chief Doreen Davis