

From: [Julie Reid](#)
To: [Jana Nethercott](#)
Cc: jeff.yurekco@pc.ola.org; minister.mecp@ontario.ca
Subject: Letter re: Ontario's Energy Plan and Wind Turbines on behalf of te MMWTWG
Date: March 2, 2022 5:40:10 PM
Attachments: [Noise Audit Status Feb 2022 v3.1.docx](#)
[Appendix 2 Complaints.docx](#)

March 2, 2022

Municipality of West Elgin
jnethercott@westelgin.net

RE: Ontario's Energy Plan and Wind Turbines

Dear Mayor and Council:

I am writing to share information compiled by the Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Group (MMWTWG) on recent plans announced by the Ontario government to expand electricity generation capacity. We are providing this update to you because your municipality endorsed a 2017 resolution indicating that you were an "Unwilling Host" for wind turbine projects. While the threat of new wind turbine projects disappeared while Ontario had a surplus of generation capacity for electricity, the recent announcements suggest a potential for new wind projects.

The MMWTWG was initially created in 2009 by municipalities in Bruce, Grey and Huron Counties to share information on wind turbine projects being proposed or operating in our municipalities. The organization is a joint committee with elected and citizen representatives from the member municipalities. Since its formation, we have been monitoring the operation of wind turbines and advocating on behalf of our residents adversely affected by the wind turbines.

I wanted to ensure that your municipality is aware of the Ontario government's recently announced plans that have potential to lead to new wind turbine installations in rural Ontario. This plan is included among the energy program that was announced at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association meeting and in a speech that Todd Smith, as Minister of Energy, gave to the Empire Club. The program includes a pilot SMR pilot nuclear facility at Darlington, expanded hydroelectric generation capacity, new RFPs for medium term and long term generation capacity and a program to certify renewable energy generation capacity.

We are specifically concerned about the certification program. While limited details are available for this program, we are concerned that wind turbines are included among the renewable energy generation facilities that can be certified under the program used to allow the installation of larger turbines within existing project sites. The wind companies are certainly listening as leasing activity in support of a project has already been reported in southwestern Ontario.

While changes introduced by the government allow municipalities to regulate the creation of new wind turbine facilities within their communities through zoning by-laws, other regulatory changes by the government exempts existing wind projects from these municipal by-laws, even when the project operator is replacing the existing wind turbines with larger, more powerful equipment. On this basis, the project repowering included in the recent Ministerial Directive would not require any municipal input or approval due to this regulation.

Many municipalities that have started the process of drafting by-laws relative to wind turbines find that they need direction on appropriate setbacks that would be included in a municipal zoning by-law. They know that the existing setbacks in Regulation 359/09 are not sufficient to protect residents and they are looking to the provincial government for revised setbacks reflecting the learning from the existing projects and the lived experiences in other jurisdictions. If the province is reviving wind power development, it needs to take a leadership role by updating these regulations immediately.

We are also concerned about the government's failure to address the problems created by the existing wind turbine projects. These projects operate under Renewable Energy Approvals or REAs that set out very strict operating requirements. First, project operators are required to prove that the project is operating within the 40 dBA audible noise limit by filing noise audit reports prove compliance. Many projects were provided with specific deadlines for the submission of these reports. The attached appendix shows the status of these audits based on public information. Only 45% of projects have reached some form of closure with the other continuing to operate (three continuing even though they have been found to be non-compliant) despite concrete timelines for action in their REAs.

The failure of the government to enforce the requirements of the REAs for wind turbine project operators to investigate and resolve complaints about project operations is another concern. More than 5,800 Incident Reports have been created as a result of complaints about noise emissions from wind turbine projects and based on feedback from the residents in our communities there has been little or no action by the project operators on these matters. Frankly, the government has shown no interest in working on behalf of rural residents. This is an additional concern as 39% of the Incident Reports, prepared and signed by Provincial Officers, include references to adverse health effects.

If you have not already made adjustments to your zoning by-laws, I hope that this reminder will prompt your Council to review their contents in the context of the government's apparent plans to start construction of more wind turbines despite the past failings of this technology.

Our view is that the provincial government needs to:

- **Update the direction provided in terms of setbacks** between wind turbines and other activities,
- The government needs to **take more aggressive action in enforcing the terms of the approvals** for existing wind turbines before authorizing the construction of any new turbines, and,
- Bar operators of projects with these compliance failures from

participating in any of the contract extensions or opportunities to bid on capacity expansions that are envisioned in the recent Ministerial Directive.

If you agree, we ask that you communicate your concern to Minister David Piccini, Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks as well as your local MPP(s).

If your municipality is interested in joining the Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Group to receive updates on these matters please contact the Deputy-Clerk for information on the fee structure. The group meets every second month and Zoom facilitates the participation of members beyond easy driving distance of the normal meeting site in Chesley.

Yours truly,

Tom Allwood,
Chair, Multi-Municipal Wind Turbine Working Group
Councillor, Municipality of Grey Highlands

c. Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks,
minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Jeff Yurek, Elgin-Middlesex-London, jeff.yurekco@pc.ola.org

Appendix 1: Status of Compliance Noise Audits

This table is based on information originally released in August 2019 by the MECP in response to a Freedom of Information request. It has been updated with information on more recent compliance testing from project websites. As the Protocol requires that project operators post these audit reports on their websites within 10 business days of their submission to the MECP, this should be an accurate source of status information.

	Project Name	Commercial Operation Date ¹	I-Audit Submitted to MECP ²	Updates to February 1, 2022 ³	MECP Review Completed ⁴	Time Since Start of Operation ⁵
	Demonstrated Compliance	Share – 43% - Average time under review – 3.8 years				
1.	Adelaide (Suncor) Wind	January 28, 2015	October 29, 2015		March 9, 2020	5.1 years
2.	Armow Wind Project	December 7, 2015	February 24, 2017		November 6, 2020	4.8 years
3.	Belle River Wind	September 1, 2017	August 6, 2020		August 20, 2020	2.6 years
4.	Bluewater Wind	July 19, 2014	June 12, 2015		June 25, 2019	4.9 years
5.	Bow Lake	August 10, 2015	August 9, 2017		March 21, 2019	3.6 years
6.	Dufferin Wind	December 1, 2014	September 1, 2015		September 26, 2018	3.8 years
7.	East Lake St Clair	May 22, 2013	April 20, 2016 ⁶		April 20, 2016	2.9 years
8.	Ernestown Wind	September 30, 2014	June 29, 2015		April 30, 2018	3.6 years
9.	Grand Bend Wind	April 19, 2016	March 21, 2017		December 4, 2018	2.6 years
10.	Grand Renewable Energy	December 9, 2014	December 21, 2015		November 4, 2019	4.9 years
11.	HAF Wind	June 14, 2014	March 14, 2015		December 17, 2018	4.5 years
12.	Grey Highland Clean Energy	September 21, 2016	July 11, 2017		August 30, 2019	2.9 years
13.	Grey Highlands ZEP	February 26, 2016	July 31, 2018		August 30, 2019	3.6 years
14.	MacLean's Mountain Wind	May 1, 2014	February 27, 2015		March 20, 2019	4.9 years
15.	Moorefield Wind	May 16, 2017	December 17, 2018		March 25, 2019	1.9 years
16.	Oxley Wind	February 8, 2014	September 27, 2017		April 25, 2019	5.2 years
17.	Napier Wind	December 3, 2015	March 3, 2017		January 22, 2021	5.1 years
18.	Quixote One	August 14, 2015	September 1, 2017		April 15, 2019	3.7 years
19.	St Columban Wind	July 16, 2015	June 22, 2016		October 2, 2018	3.2 years
20.	Settler's Landing	April 5, 2017	August 22, 2018		May 10, 2019 ⁷	2.1 years

	Demonstrated Non-Compliance- REA Amended		Share – 2%			
1.	North Kent 1 Wind	February 22, 2018	June 30, 2019	November 1, 2021	November 1, 2021 ⁸	3.7 years

	Demonstrated Non-Compliance – No Resolution		Share – 7% - Average time under review - 6.8 years			
1.	K2 Wind ⁹	May 29, 2015	November 25, 2016	December 12, 2019		6.8 years
2.	Unifor/CAW ¹⁰	October 24, 2013	June 28, 2018	No Updates	Not Provided	8.3 years
3.	Niagara Region Wind	November 2, 2016	July 20, 2018	February 3, 2021		5.3 years

	Deemed Incomplete	Share - 17% - Average time under review – 7.1 years				
1.	Cedar Point Wind	October 7, 2015	September 21, 2016	June 24, 2019		6.3 years
2.	East Durham Wind	August 15, 2015	August 17, 2016	July 2, 2019		6.5 years
3.	Goshen Wind	January 28, 2015	January 28, 2016	November 7, 2017		7.1 years
4.	Grand Valley Wind Phase 3	December 3, 2015	November 30, 2016	March 1, 2021		6.2 years
5.	Pt. Dover/Nanticoke Wind	November 8, 2013	August 6, 2014	December 16, 2020		8.3 years
6.	South Branch Wind	March 4, 2014	May 28, 2015	March 3, 2016		7.9 years
7.	Springwood Wind	November 21, 2014	May 31, 2016	No Updates ¹¹		7.2 years
8.	Whittington Wind	November 21, 2014	April 1, 2016	No Updates ¹¹		7.2 years

	Under Review	Share – 30% - Average time under review – 6.0 years				
1.	Adelaide (NextEra) Wind	August 22, 2014	August 10, 2015	June 26, 2020		7.3 years
2.	Amherst Island Wind	June 15, 2018	June 14, 2019	May 14, 2020		3.6 years
3.	Bornish Wind	August 15, 2014	August 7, 2015	July 2, 2020		7.3 years
4.	Conestogo Wind	December 20, 2012	December 20, 2013	April 5, 2019		9.1 years
5.	Gunn's Hill Wind	November 14, 2016	October 16, 2018	No Information		5.1 years
6.	Port Ryerse Wind	December 9, 2016	July 17, 2018	No Updates		5.1 years
7.	Romney Wind	December 31, 2019	Not Yet Due	June 29, 2021		1.8 year
8.	Snowy Ridge	October 5, 2016	September 20, 2017	No Updates ¹¹		5.3 years
9.	South Kent Wind	March 28, 2014	January 30, 2015	August 14, 2020		7.9 years
10.	Sumac Ridge Wind	November 17, 2017	September 27, 2018	No Information		4.1 years
11.	Summerhaven Wind	August 6, 2013	February 10, 2014	May 1, 2020		8.5 years
12.	Underwood ¹²	February 9, 2009	Not Provided	No Updates		13.0 years

13.	Wainfleet Wind	September 17, 2014	May 15, 2015	No Information		6.4 years
14.	ZEP Ganaraska Wind	May 6, 2016	September 14, 2018	No Information		4.7 years

	Submission Due					
1.	Henvey Inlet	October 19, 2019	Due – October 2020	No Information		2.3 years

	Not Yet Due					
1.	Nation Rise	June 17,2021	Due - June 2022			0.6 years

¹ IESO Active Contract List as at September 30, 2021

² Data Provided by MECP as at July 30, 2019

³ Based on a review of project websites – “No Updates” = No change in information; “No information” = audit no information posted on website

⁴ Dates provided by MECP.

⁵ Elapsed time calculated either to the date compliance was confirmed or to the current date.

⁶ Identical dates for submission and review completion provided by MECP

⁷ Approval date posted by operator conflicts with status provided by MECP 2 months after “approval”

⁸ REA amended to reduce night time noise levels at 2 wind turbines to bring noise levels within noise guidelines.

⁹ In May 2019, the Ministry found the K2 project was out of compliance and ordered the operator to develop and implement a Noise Abatement Action Plan.

¹⁰ Turbine determined to be non-compliant on March 8, 2018, Noise Abatement Action Plan implemented. Problem not resolved.

¹¹ Capstone Renewable Project, limited project documentation posted on project websites.

¹² I-Audit report submitted in January 30, 2018 accepted and then rejected by MECP. More noise testing is currently underway.

Appendix 2: Complaints by Project

The following table summarizes the information on the complaint records provided in response to a series of four Freedom of Information requests. In total, the information released indicates that more than 5,800 complaints have been made about the operations of wind turbine projects between 2006 and 2018. (The requests for information covering 2019 and 2020 are outstanding. The fact the government does not have rapid access to these records to fulfill FOI requests is proof that citizen complaints are going nowhere, and are not subject to any high level scrutiny.)

Communications from residents indicate that when there is no follow-up action on complaints, people just give up and stop complaining. This does not mean that the problems have been resolved. Actual follow-up on high profile situations could encourage many residents to start documenting their concerns and reports of poor health again.

Site Name	Start Year	2006 - 2014	2015 - 2016	2017	2018	Total
Melancthon Wind (All Phases)	2008	873	62	0	26	961
K2 Wind	2015	1	413	178	149	741
Unifor (CAW)	2013	236	92	174	147	649
Enbridge Underwood	2009	442	73	14	27	556
Talbot Wind Farm	2010	388	7	2	6	403
East Durham	2015		293	6	27	326
Thames Valley Phase 1&2	2010	239	16		0	255
Capstone - Grey Highlands	2014		3	121	79	203
Comber Wind	2010	127		2	9	138
Frogmore-Cultus-Clear Creek	2008	131	4		0	135
HAF Wind	2014	71	57	2	0	130
Niagara Wind	2016	0	24	20	83	127
Harrow Wind	2010	117	6		0	123
Plateau Wind	2012	119	1		0	120
Ripley Wind	2007	99			0	99
Conestogo Wind	2010	69	10		0	79
Grand Valley Wind	2012	24	38		8	70
Kent Breeze Wind	2011	55	2		0	57
Snowy Ridge	2016		7	46	1	54
Dufferin Wind	2014	3	50		0	53
Grand Bend Wind	2016		13	37	2	52
St. Columban Wind	2017	1	30	11	5	47
South Kent Wind	2014	35	5		0	40
Settler's Landing	2017			35	2	37
Adelaide Wind	2014		34	2	0	36

McLean's Mtn. Wind	2010	27	6	3	0	36
Ernestown Wind Park	2014	1	33		0	34
Summerhaven Wind	2010	19	8	3	1	31
Wolfe Island Wind	2009	22		1		23
Proof Line Wind	2009	20				20
Grand Renewable	2014		19		1	20
Bluewater Wind	2011	8	8	2		18
Jericho Wind	2014	3	15			18
Armow	2011		15			15
Amherst Island	2018				15	15
Cedar Point	2011		10	4		14
Goshen Wind	2015		8	2		10
Port Alma Wind	2008	9				9
Erieau-Blenheim Wind	2013	8				8
Erie Shores (Port Burwell)	2006	5			2	7
Raleigh Wind Energy	2011	6				6
Kruger-Chatham Wind	2011	5				5
Port Ryerse Wind	2016		5			5
Marsh Line	2010			4	1	5
North Kent Wind	2018		3		2	5
Bornish Wind	2011	1	3			4
Ganaraska Wind	2016		4			4
Zephyr Wind Farm	2012	4				4
Port Dover/Nanticoke	2013	3				3
South Branch Wind	2014	3				3
Springwood Wind	2014		3			3
Sumac Ridge	2013			3		3
Bow Lake	2010			1	2	3
Gesner Wind	2013	2				2
Oxley Wind Farm	2014	2				2
Prince I & II Wind	2006	2				2
Napier Wind	2015		1			1
Wainfleet Wind	2014		1			1
Otter Creek	-			1		1
Total		3,180	1,382	674	595	5,831