Meeting Minutes

County of Prince Edward Public Consultation	
Thursday, June 4, 2015	**6:00pm – 8:00pm**
Meeting Location	Sophiasburgh Town Hall 2711 County Rd 5 Demorestville, ON
Attendees	53 community members (of which 39 signed-in), including: • 2 municipal councillors • 1 municipal staff member 6 Registered Proponent project team members No media *With personal information removed in accordance with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2000.*
Overview of the Meeting	
Overview and Feedback on the meeting	The meeting was open format – community members were welcome to come at any time, view the publicly displayed material, and ask questions. 8 feedback forms were completed: "How did you find out about the Public Community Meeting?" • By direct mailing: 3 • Newspaper ad: 1 • Word of mouth: 3 • Unspecified: 1 "What was your overall reaction to this information session?" • Good: 2 – Registered Proponent project member "The session was helpful in understanding the Large Renewable Procurement process" • Poor: 2 • Unspecified:4
Comments and Concerns	
General / All Projects	8 feedback forms were completed: "After attending this community information session, how do you feel about the project?" • Overall support: 2 – "I think [Registered Proponent project member] understood what our concerns would be if this projects receives approval" • Neutral (overall neither support nor oppose): 1 • Oppose: 5 – "We don't need it", "No more solar projects

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	in Sophiasburg", "Too many solar projects nearby already"
National habitats and animal migration patterns	**Community Member #1**: • There is a Purple Martin colony in the area (Purple Martin is the largest North American swallow) **Community Member #2**: • Concerned about vulnerable flora and fauna including climbing prairie rose, four-leaved milkweed, bobolink and eastern meadowlark **Community Member #3**: • Concerned about the endangered Blanding's Turtle and other endangered species **Community Member #4**: • Concerned about the wetlands and trees on the property • If trees are removed to develop this project, would like them replaced elsewhere in the local area **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Solar development is non-invasive. That includes being respectful of all identified national habitats and migration patterns. Through the Government of Ontario's Renewable Energy Approvals (REA) process, species that may be at risk or disposed because of any solar development are identified. Action is taken to either support the thriving development of these animals or plans are changed to ensure their survival. In one of our operating projects in Ontario, the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike, a small migratory bird, was protected. A population was located in proximity of the site to ensure the survival of the species. Safety fencing, special animal friendly fencing, was used to build a secure area for the birds and to allow animals to pass underneath so as to not restrict their natural movement.
Construction/traffic/damage of roadways during construction	**Community Member #1**: • Concerned about construction traffic and believes that municipal bylaws should be implemented to prevent construction outside of 7am-7pm. • Because there is 1" to 20" of bedrock in the area, concerned about construction vibrations **Community Member #5:** • Construction – deterioration of roads and amount of dust

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	Community Member #6: • Concerned about the road destruction and (lack of) repairs post construction • Need signage with contact information to report concerns/request repairs **Community Member #9:** • Fears for safety of children due to traffic • Does not want the condition of the road to be compromised. • Feels that current construction of solar projects by another developer has significantly deteriorated the road conditions on Jericho Road and the municipality (tax payers) have to cover the cost of the repairs **Community Member #7:** • Concerned about the current construction of "mega projects" by another solar developer on Burr Road and Doxee Road. **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Renewable energy projects require some time to be built and as such, require the use of local roadways adding some additional traffic to the community. Solar projects of a large scale (over 10 MW) tend to take approximately 9-12 months to construct. All construction is approved via the Ontario Government's Renewable Energy Approval (REA) process and the local municipality prior to work commencing. Compared to some other energy generating facilities, this is not a significant amount of time. Additional traffic to the community is minimal and construction machinery is housed on the project site. While some large trucks may cause undo damage to some of the roadways, it is our charge to ensure that roads are kept in the same shape or better than they were prior to the project's construction. The municipality will set out guidelines for our operation in the community through a municipal agreement. Municipal agreements typically contain but are not excluded to: • Traffic, affects to public access • Emergency procedures, for first responders • Roadways, damage and timing on repair Once construction is complete and during the operational phase of the facility, only one pick-up truck will visit the site per week.

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	Safety is paramount when it comes to transportation of materials and construction of the park itself. All unloading and loading is done within a contained site surrounded by perimeter fence and monitored by security cameras. The Renewable Energy Approval (REA) process in Ontario exists to address concerns related to many factors associated with renewable energy project development. Rigorous standards are applied to all renewable energy projects so as to ensure they are built safely, securely and in a way that respects the surrounding community, environment and its residents. Noise, vibrations and other such concerns are all addressed in the REA process once a contract is awarded.
Well water and ground water contamination	**Community Member #1**: • Wants to ensure that the municipality/ landowners are compensated for possible water system and structural damage, should they occur **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Community interest and public scrutiny are common in relation to any land development and the potential threat to wells, ground and source water. To address these inquiries, the Government of Ontario requires all renewable energy projects to complete a Renewable Energy Approvals (REA) process. Through the REA process, proposals competing under the Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO) Large Renewable Procurement (LRP) program must, upon awarding of a contract, meet extremely strenuous criteria relating to the environment. This applies to all aspects of the environment, from water sources to flora and fauna. Before construction of a project can even begin, all aspects of the Ontario REA process must be met, or the project does not get built. In addition, the municipality will set out guidelines for our operation in the community through a municipal agreement. Municipal agreements typically contain but are not excluded to: • Traffic, affects to public access • Emergency procedures, for first responders • Roadways, damage and timing on repair

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	These agreements ensure that municipalities and residents can have expectations on how the project is to be built meeting the needs of the community.
Land and property value	**Community Member #9:** • Supports solar projects but expressed concern over property value as a neighbour; **<u>Proposed response:</u>** As utility-scale solar developments are a recent advancement in the renewable energy field, there is no available evidence-to-date (via systematic reviews of impact on property values) that links the location of a solar facility with impacts on property value. Landowners that have lease agreements will be compensated, and the increase in revenue per acre for the lessor could potentially result in an increase in property value. With regards to a property being within a visual distance of the solar facility and the potential effects to property values, the solar development will be designed to minimize any potential visual effects on nearby landowners and thus any potential impact to property values.
Format of Public Meeting	**Community Member #7:** • Did not like the Open House style meeting and would have preferred a formal presentation followed by a Question and Answer period with a panel of experts **Community Member #6:** • Felt that there was insufficient information provided at the public meeting **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** The open format of the meeting was structured to accommodate everyone's schedule – so that those with work, family, or other commitments could come anytime between 6:00pm-8:00pm and not feel they missed a presentation or part of the meeting Community members often talked amongst themselves and formed small groups around SkyPower's experts, allowing them to hear each other's interests and concerns. There were six SkyPower representatives present to answer questions
Visual Impact	**Community Member #5:** Based on existing projects by another developer currently under

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	constructions • Rather have black fencing rather than chain links as it is an eyesore **Community Member #7:** • Concerned about the proposed connection line and how it would visually look. Suggested use of existing hydro easement behind her property on Miller Road (EmmittingLight). **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Visual impact is one of the most frequent questions we receive from community members with regards to solar park development. Visual abatement is a key component of solar park development. While the park is being constructed, it is quite visible as the construction process calls for open space. However, once the construction phase is completed, we work with community members as well as local governments to ensure that the integration of the solar park into the landscape is done properly and those affected are satisfied. Using various techniques such as setbacks, land forming, strategic placement of mature trees and vegetation and fencing, the goal is to have the solar project nearly invisible to any passer-by. Regarding the use of the existing hydro corridor, the Engineering team has informed us that connecting directly to the transmission lines will not be feasible. This is due to the connection line having to pass through a transmission station before connecting to the electrical grid.
Electrical Demand in Ontario	**Community Member #8:** • Does not believe the energy consumption levels reported officially (by the IESO). Feels that existing energy infrastructure will support Ontario's future demand. **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Ontario is a large and populous province. As of January 2014, Ontario has a population of over 13.6 million, accounting for nearly 40% of the population of Canada. While the population is more heavily concentrated in major cities in Ontario, those in the rural communities still need everything those living in cities do, including energy. With increasing population comes increasing need for electricity. The electrical generating sources we have counted on for years can no longer do the job on their own. Nuclear energy, which accounts for over 60% of the province's electrical generation, is aging and needs

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	refurbishment. When we do choose to refurbish nuclear facilities, we need to replace the generation when the reactors are turned off. With the removal of coal-fired generation by the Ontario Government, the issue has been compounded. The province will need to generate more electricity to make up for shortfalls from the plants being shut down. Natural gas-fired electrical generation will make up some of the needed electricity but at the expense of the environment and there will still be a gap left in needed capacity. Renewables, and specifically in this case solar energy, can help fill that gap.
Land Use	**Community Member #1**: • Believes that the project should not be in the area as he believes that this is a residential area **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Proposed renewable energy projects have land use restrictions on them and as such must be located on lands that are deemed appropriate. Appropriateness is determined by both the municipality as well as the provincial government. Using information from various sources, a determination is made as to which lands are appropriate for which type of development. As the proponent, we must abide by these parameters to proceed with any proposed project. One of the more frequent areas of interest from community members is regarding the use of agricultural land for renewable energy development. The Ontario government has put in place regulations that forbid proponents from building on certain types of Canada Land Inventory (CLI) soils. If any soil of CLI organic land Class 1, 2 or 3 is found on site, nothing can be built in this area. Municipalities do their part by identifying prime agricultural lands, which are to be off limits to development of any kind.
Project Location	**Community Member #2:** submitted letter to Proponent team members against PureLight • Lives in proximity to a project currently in construction by another developer east of the landowner • If this proposed project was to be granted, there will be another solar facility north of their property as well • Feel that large scale solar projects are turning the quiet, natural, rural neighbourhood into an industrial park

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	Community Member #6: • Believes that there are too many solar projects in the area **Community Member #1**: • Is organizing a petition against the project which will be sent to the Prince Edward Municipal Council, the Registered Proponent and the Ministry of Energy **Community Member #10:** • Currently, there are 4 existing operating projects in the area. If this project is approved there will be too many solar projects in the county **<u>Proposed Response:</u>** Ontario is a large and populous province. As of January 2014, Ontario has a population of over 13.6 million, accounting for nearly 40% of the population of Canada. While the population is more heavily concentrated in major cities in Ontario, those in the rural communities still need everything those living in cities do, including energy. With increasing population comes increasing need for electricity. Nuclear energy, which accounts for over 60% of the province's electrical generation, is aging and needs refurbishment. When we do choose to refurbish nuclear facilities, we need to replace the generation when the reactors are turned off. With the removal of coal-fired generation by the Ontario Government, the issue has been compounded. The province will need to generate more electricity to make up for shortfalls from the plants being shut down. Renewables, and specifically in this case solar energy, can help fill that gap. The Ontario government has put regulations* in place about the types of land proponents, like us, can build on. Your community has an abundance of the type of land solar projects can be built on. This means landowners who would otherwise have empty land will be compensated for leasing the to land us. Our project will also create local jobs in construction and trade, which can be sourced locally, as well as supporting local jobs in manufacturing and engineering. The projects bring a net financial gain to your community. * Detailed information about agricultural land use can be found here: http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/

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Risk of development of solar projects	**Community Member #7:** • Feels that all the Registered Proponent does not take on any risk during the development and construction of the solar project but all the risk is passed onto the landowners and the municipality **<u>Proponent's Response</u>:** Doing business is an assumed risk. Any company entering into any business sector assumes a risk of being unsuccessful. In the case of renewable energy projects, investments in time, money and resources by renewable energy companies are quite large. Those investments are put in jeopardy if a project does not adhere to the proper parameters, regulations, and permits. By ignoring such criteria, the company risks those investments and is likely to be unsuccessful. Therefore, to minimize the company's risk, it is in the best interest of the proposal's success to work in collaboration with communities and its residents to ensure that risk is minimized for both parties. Municipal agreements are created between proponents and municipalities to address many of the concerns that communities have based on new large-scale developments. The municipality will set out guidelines for operation in the community through this municipal agreement. Municipal agreements typically contain but are not excluded to: • Traffic, affects to public access • Emergency procedures, for first responders • Roadways, damage and timing on repair