

Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Centre Inc.

5220 Front Road, Stella, ON. K0H 2S0

Registered Charity # 864124243RR0001

Suzanne Edwards
Senior Project Evaluator
Ministry of the Environment

February 25, 2014

RE: EBR Registry Number: 012-0774

Dear Ms. Edwards:

As president of the Board of Directors of the Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Center on Amherst Island, I want to ensure that the structure, heritage value, and use of the Museum building is protected if the Amherst Island Wind Energy Project proceeds. I have previously sent a similar letter of concern to Mr. Sean Fairfield Senior Manager of Algonquin Power. A copy of this letter is included as an attachment. Mr. Fairfield's response to my letter was totally unacceptable. He did not answer a single concern or question that I raised and I do not believe that his suggestion that Stantec Consulting Ltd. undertook a detailed assessment of heritage resources was correct. No one on the board of directors was consulted or questioned about this assessment, and there was no structural evaluation of the building or its contents. In fact, additional information that has since come to my knowledge raises additional concerns for the Museum.

1) The Front Road is too close to the front of the Museum building to allow transit of large vehicles carrying heavy loads. Since visitors to the Museum, and to the Weasel and Easel, a craft store used by Island artists and artisans to display and sell their merchandise, park diagonally in front of the building, the visitors and their vehicles will be in danger of being struck by the large trucks proposed for the construction phase. Visitors to the museum also take the walking tour of the village or just stroll to the village park. Again, these visitors will be endangered by the large trucks. I now understand that the project would involve at least 11,000 trips of oversized vehicles through the village and past the Museum. This would make access to the Museum/Weasel & Easel unappealing at the least and impossible at most. This will devastate the income of both organizations for the duration of the construction phase and compensation should be considered and offered by the proponent.

2) The Museum building is a heritage building constructed on a stone foundation. The building will be subject to vibrations from large vehicles used in the construction phase. Any construction carried out in front of museum building, such as trenching, is also a potential hazard and can cause damage to the building. Once it starts, it is already too late to repair. This construction will also pose a problem for visitors to the Museum and Craft store by limiting access to the building and is potentially dangerous to the visitors. Therefore, a proper assessment of potential vibration damage will have to be conducted by independent structural engineers before construction commences. This must be done before the construction phase as it will be too late to repair damage after the fact. "Mitigation" does not mean rebuilding entire historic buildings. The fact that the back of the museum building is precariously perched on the side of a very steep hill with Stella Bay only meters away adds further concerns. Limestone carries vibration great distance. Even hoe-ramming or blasting from the nearest proposed turbine could destabilize the building. No engineering reports

have been done in this regard. Therefore, how can the “final report” be “final”. The museum is also responsible for the protection of exhibits displayed and stored in our building and we again have to insure that no damage occurs to our exhibits. Proper due diligence has not been done. The Windlectric/Algonquin Power submission is incomplete and must be sent back to the proponent for more serious assessment and a more detailed submission must be made before the project can be considered.

4) The draft report claims that shadow flicker will not cause a problem. This is a patently false statement. Flicker will be a serious problem and will destroy the esthetics of the museum exhibits. The museum has large front windows that face south and the interior will be subjected to severe flicker. Flicker will make it difficult to read exhibit captions and will interfere with reading reference materials. The board of directors has proposed installing a computer system at the museum to catalog all reference materials so that the historical data can be readily accessed by visitors and historians. Flicker will make it difficult to read computer screens and some people are sensitive to flicker and read with difficulty under this condition.

5) The concerns of the Museum board also extend to the other heritage sites on Amherst Island including the extremely vulnerable historic buildings in Stella. We would like assurances that these sites are protected. These sites include the entire village of Stella, especially Victoria Hall, Trinity United Church, the blacksmith shop, the village grocery as well as others buildings that open directly to the street. All are endangered by the proposed construction due to vibrations and each building must be assessed by an independent structural engineer. Once damage starts it is too late.

The board of directors will be awaiting your answers to the problems listed above.

John Schutzbach, PhD
President of the Board of Directors
Neilson Store Museum and Cultural Center

Home address:
4545 South Shore Road
Stella, Ontario
K0H 2S0