

Notes to file

Ted Currie

Re: Proposed Irving Gravel Pit and Wharf, Beaver Harbour

I attended a public meeting yesterday, Tuesday April 22, 2003 in Pennfield. The meeting was preceded by an open house between 15:00 and 19:00. The public meeting commenced at 19:00 and continued until 22:00. Mr Bill Borland (J.D. Irving Ltd) gave an overview of the project and stressed to all present that it was still just a concept. The purpose of tonight's meeting was to give the local residents an opportunity to ask questions, and offer comments on the project concept. The consultant for the project, Mr Jeff Barnes (Jacques Whitford Ltd) described the review – approval process including the regulatory requirements which included, NWPA approval, CEAA – CSR, NBEIA Registration, and the Local Service District planning commission. The public was advised that each of these regulatory requirements include an allowance for public consultation. Tonight's meeting was the first step in the consultation process and any questions – concerns presented would be addressed through the environmental assessment process. Given the conceptual stage of the project, answers to most of the public's questions or concerns would have to wait for future meetings.

Public concerns – questions included the following:

- Requested clarification on the NWPA review process, timing of advertisements, public input
- Concern for aesthetics, project will result in garbage on local beaches, and pollution
- Concern the gravel washing operation will result in contamination of surface waters
- Concern the operation will result in noise, contamination of water table, pollution, and alternatives like using the ports of Bayside or Saint John should be considered
- What will be the benefits of the project to the local residents of Beaver Harbour?
- How will gravel be moved from the stock piles to the conveyor loading system?
- Concern the operation will impact on an adjacent cottage.
- Does Irving have signed contracts in place for the sale of the aggregate? No
- Will Irving abandon the project if local residents are unanimously opposed?
- Concern with the effect of the project on the larger community.
- Concern with reclamation of the site, source of infill material, source of topsoil, and potential future uses for the site, like landfill
- Concern with impacts associated with the release of bilge water into Beaver Harbour.
- concerns will the effects of particulates on human health, (size, chemical composition remain unknown)
- concern the facility will become another large commercial port and will impact on established local businesses, community, and the environment
- concern the water requirements for the gravel washing will lower the Pennfield aquifer and impact on established domestic water supplies.
- If the LSD (Local Service District) votes against the project will the project be abandoned?
- Concern for particulars of processing waste water, recycling, water source, requirements, and disposal must be fully considered.
- Noise, and expected offsite decibel levels from various of heavy equipment including rock crushers, loaders, trucks, etc
- Noise, and experience from the nearby port of Bayside, workers require ear plugs, dust masks, and the potential impacts on nearby residents
- Concern the facility will gradually transform a rural economy into an industrial area
- The local planning commission must approve a change in zoning to allow the project to proceed.....this will require a public hearing and the approval of the NBD0ELG.
- A local resident uses water from Cripps Stream and concerned the operation will reduce stream flow and impact on his supply.
- Questioned if Irving will be leasing crown land and paying a royalty to the province....no, Irving owns the proposed gravel pit location.
- Questioned the experience of the consultants with projects of this type and complexity.

- Will mining of the aggregate result in the release of acid rock drainage?
- Concerned the estimated tonnage to be mined each year should be considered as a volume (1,000,000 tonnes is approximately 2,600,000 cubic meters) will result in huge hole in the ground. The public should understand the footprint of the project.
- Will the proponent stop with shipping aggregate through the proposed facility or will other commodities later be shipped through the port and the area further industrialized?
- One speaker drew parallels between the abolition of slavery, and the local people rising up to free themselves from the greed of the Irving empire.
- Concerned the government will not follow up to ensure regulatory requirements are complied, particularly noise.
- Concerned the port development will result in the destruction of fisheries resources and used the example of the depleted state of fish stocks in the port of Saint John.
- Concerned the provincial EIA process is flawed, projects are never turned down, they always proceed, and the consultants make a lot of money collecting information that the government ignores.
- Concerned the proposed wharf facility is contrary to the NBDOLG's Coastal Zone Policy.
- Concerned that vessels may be refueled in the port and impacts of potential spills on the environment.
- Concerned with the change in the quality of life that will result from the facility
- Concerned with the depth of the gravel pits and impacts on groundwater quality and quantity
- Opposed to the project as proposed and requested it be significantly redesigned or relocated
- Requested clarification on the project schedule,
- Concern with the volume of domestic water that ships may require while loading, how much water will be needed and will it impact on the Pennfield aquifer?