

# PUBLIC HEARING

## WHITES POINT QUARRY AND MARINE TERMINAL PROJECT

### JOINT REVIEW PANEL

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#### V O L U M E 7

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HELD BEFORE: Dr. Robert Fournier (Chair)  
Dr. Jill Grant (Member)  
Dr. Gunter Muecke (Member)

PLACE HEARD: Digby, Nova Scotia

DATE HEARD: Saturday, June 23, 2007

PRESENTERS: -Ms. Susan Davis  
-Le conseil des Arts de la Baie  
Ms. Nora Robichaud  
-Dr. Mary McCarthy and Dr. Doreen Evenden  
-Ms. June Swift  
-Joan Boutilier, Eva Holzawarth, Helen Whidden  
-Micheale Kustudic, Pat McLean, Maxine McQuaig  
-Green Party of Nova Scotia  
Mr. William Lang  
-Mr. John Scott and Ms. Mary Scott  
-Mr. Calum MacKenzie  
-Mr. Chris Callaghan  
-Mr. Henry Bradford  
-Little River Residents Group  
Mr. Tony Kelly and Mr. Kevin Gidney

-Atlantic Canada Chapter, Sierra Club of Cda  
Dr. Janet Eaton (postponed)

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Per: H el ene Boudreau-Laforge, CCR

After the Proponent has decided that either he has completed his questions or doesn't wish to have any questions, we then go to the audience.

So the audience can in fact, and that's you, all of you have the opportunity to ask questions if you like to the presenter. And it's only then, after those questions have been asked, that we move on to the next individual, okay?

So we now move to Mr. Buxton.

Mr. PAUL BUXTON: Thank you Mr. Chair, I have no questions.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So are there questions from the audience? From any of you? And if there are, just come to the microphone and all manner of questions are asked, so don't feel inhibited or intimidated in any way. No?

Okay. Thank you very much Ms. Davis. Next we come to Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie. Will this presentation be in French?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: No. THE

CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

**PRESENTATION BY LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE - Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD**

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Good morning. My

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD)

name is Nora Robichaud, and I am speaking on behalf of Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie.

I could have done this in French, but I chose to do it in the lingo that the Proponent understand, all right?

I'm an artist, a member of Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie, and the Program Coordinator of this non-profit organization.

Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie has approximately 100 members and is very active in developing and promoting the arts in the Acadian Community of Clare, which borders on St. Mary's Bay.

A portion of our Membership is also composed of artists who live outside of Clare, including some from Digby Neck, as well as seasonal residents from the United States.

All our members share enthusiasm for the unique cultural and ecological gifts that are bound in this area and we all share an investment in promoting the arts as a valuable contribution to our community's economy and quality of life.

The artist's sense of place and space is extremely important to their creative vision.

Those who choose to live here and pursue

their art are inspired and motivated by the natural beauty of their surroundings, the peacefulness and pace of life that encourage reflection and introspection.

The environment that surrounds us is intimately connected to our work, providing subject matter and atmosphere that is conducive to creative expression.

I have provided you each with one of our pamphlets. Look at that. It's called: "Arts de la Baie". It's mostly... There's a lot of blue there, and you sense the peacefulness and the joy in this art.

Although we are experiencing the challenges of a decreasing population base, our community is still a vibrant and interesting place to live.

Why? Because our deep cultural routes have been nourished by the many visual artists, musicians, dancers, writers and artisans who call the community of Clare home.

Their creative efforts are visibly promoted and enjoyed by the public through performance and theatrical productions, workshops and various media, our programs in schools and a mushrooming of small galleries and studios now dotting the landscape.

Our community values art to the point where it wants us, Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie, to be a

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD)

partner in the new cultural centre that will be built within the next two years at Université Ste-Anne, our local French language university.

Le Conseil will have an office in the Centre and will be the administrator of the public art gallery that will be housed there.

Why does our community value us? There are many reasons of course, but I would like to highlight one today, we bring in tourists.

Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie was responsible last year for producing and distributing a beautiful brochure featuring several artists and artisans in Clare. Again, it is this pamphlet here.

We know that this brochure brought tourists to our area because we heard comments such as: "We were going to go to Lunenburg, but we picked up this brochure and decided to go to Clare instead."

Positive feedback convinced us of the value of our efforts to invest in this project again this year.

If tourists come here to find and purchase art, other local businesses profit as well, such as restaurants, motels, inns, bed & breakfasts, campgrounds, gas stations, et cetera.

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We also have learned that tourists come to our community because of other known attractions in the area.

Whale watching out on Digby Neck is undoubtedly the most popular, even with many local residents.

We not only value our own efforts to attract and build on local economic opportunities, but we depend on other communities in the area to do likewise.

The Provincial Government also supports our efforts by giving us a grant to carry on our activities in the promotion and the development of the arts in our region.

We use that money wisely, by organizing activities such as Paint in the park, at Mavillette Beach, Clare's own scenic wonder situated at the entrance to St. Mary's Bay.

On that day, we invite artists of all disciplines to come and create art in the park. It is one of the events featured in the "Parks are for People" program managed by the Department of Natural Resources.

Will we continue with these events, with this event, and will we be inspired to do a lot more activities that invite everybody in the Province to come and

visit this region if there's a rock quarry blasting out a gaping wound on our neighbouring coastline?

How will that activity impact the waters and activities on our side of the Bay?

St. Mary's Bay, named for the patron Saint of Clare, is sacred to many Acadians. It figures prominently in our history as the site settled by our ancestors after the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755.

The waters of St. Mary's Bay have brought prosperity and abundance to our community from the fishing and related traditional industries such as ship building.

We have access to uncrowded beaches, numerous scenic trails and spectacular sunsets.

The Bay has also contributed a rich source of imagery to our folklore, visual arts and literature.

Our identity as a community is inseparable from the life and rhythms of the Bay, and any threat to the continued enjoyment of those benefits is very distressing.

Permitting a mega-quarry to operate just across the Bay from Clare is totally incompatible to our vision of this area as a major tourist attraction.



It is also incompatible to the way of life that has evolved here over many generations.

We find it irresponsible and even unethical to risk destruction of the existing sources of livelihood and survival of established communities on both sides of the Bay.

Specific to our Membership and goals, we believe that the quality of life for artists and artisans living in the area will be compromised by this development.

And who speaks for all the living creatures, known and unknown, that inhabit the waters surrounding our shores?

They face a fragile future already and blasting the coastline for the next 50 years can't help but impact negatively on their chances for survival.

If this is allowed, the negative media attention will undermine the efforts of our organization and others to build on the reputation of this area as an artist- and tourist-friendly destination, and as a place people will consider relocating to.

People will not be attracted by reports of man-made destruction of the coastal environment or want to live in a place where such things are allowed.

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD)

This will not only affect artists economically, but the entire community.

We want our resources to go into building sustainable economic opportunities that respect the values and vision of our community.

If this rock quarry truly represents no significant threat to the environment, then why are companies no longer allowed to blast along the New England coastline, and why should our coastal communities be expected to assume such great risk?

Le Conseil des Arts de la Baie is opposed to permitting a rock quarry to operate at Whites Point.

We believe that the unspoiled beauty of our coast line is one of our greatest and most cherished assets.

This view is shared by Canadians from coast to coasts who voted the Bay of Fundy a finalist in the recent Scenic Wonders of Canada contest.

We call upon our elected officials to stop Bilcon from defacing this beautiful corner of the world.

We appeal to you to do everything in your power to make this rock quarry a no go.

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL)

Thank you for listening to our concerns today.

**PRESENTATION BY LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE - QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL**

THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Robichaud, one of the cornerstones of the argument being advanced by the Proponent is that this is a community... The argument is that the broader community of the Neck is in decline, and that jobs are disappearing, young people are disappearing, and that what the quarry does is it offers an opportunity to diversify the economy, to bring in additional jobs that wouldn't be here otherwise.

If the quarry is rejected, then what alternatives do you see for this area? How do you see overcoming those...

I mean I don't think anyone disagrees with a lot of what they're saying, but how do you see reconciling that?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Well, a lot of us artists can't survive by just being an artist, so we take on part-time jobs, we find other ways of existing.

THE CHAIRPERSON: H'm.

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: I exist as an artist because I have a part-time job.

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL)

I would rather just be at home and do my art, but I put a lot of hours in for the Arts Council. I found a way of making a living. I'm not rich, in fact I'm probably at the poverty level.

Other people in the Neck have found a way. They have looked around and seen what there was to capitalize without destructing the environment, and that's why you have whale watching.

You know, it's there, they capitalized on it by the fact that the whales are there, but they don't destroy anything.

I know, it's tough questions, and I feel for these people that are looking for work, but you know, in my community, my mother came from a family of seven children, and she's the only one that stayed in Clare. Her brothers and sisters went to the States, to Hamilton, and they did good. Clare survived. We survived. We're going to.

A lot of the young people that are going out West will come back. I have two nephews that are out West right now. They're making money specifically to come back and buy land in Clare.

I think... You know, it's a tough question, but I heard so many other stories about American

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL)

companies coming in and saying: "Oh yeah, give us some money ACOA, we will build this building and we will hire all these people." Yeah, how long does it last? Two years, three years?

There's no guarantee these people are going to give jobs to the people on the Neck.

Dr. JILL GRANT: Ms. Robichaud, can I ask you a question about what proportion would you estimate the income of artists in this region is linked to tourism?

If you're selling your artwork... And I know you're working other jobs as well, but if you're selling art, what's the role of the tourist market in those sales?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: You're asking me a question with figures, and I have no idea. I just know that it has brought in artists... It has brought in people that love art, sorry, last year.

I'm sorry, I can't answer that question.

Dr. JILL GRANT: Thanks. And the other question I have is related to consultation on the Project. Was there consultation in the French communities on this Project from the Proponent?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Well, I went to the meeting that we had in Meteghan, that was organized by Trudy

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL)

Bengivenni, and after that I started getting...

Because I put my name on the list, I started getting information and I'll admit, I don't always read these thick things that come in the mail, it's just overwhelming, but I'm in contact with some of the people on Digby Neck, so I've gotten a lot of information.

And I have been reading a lot of what Andy Moir has been reading, on the day-to-day updates of the Panel presentations.

Dr. JILL GRANT: My question was related to whether there was any consultation from the Proponent. Were there community meetings held on the Project by the Proponent?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Pardon me?

Dr. JILL GRANT: By the Proponent.

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Could you start again please? I didn't get that.

Dr. JILL GRANT: Were there any meetings in your communities held by the Proponent about this Project?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: I didn't hear of any.

Dr. JILL GRANT: Okay.

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: There might have

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PANEL)

been, but I... I might have missed it, yeah.

Dr. GUNTER MUECKE: Ms. Robichaud, I think you specifically mentioned that you saw a threat in terms of the quarry, with respect to St. Mary's Bay, are there specific things that you have in mind or is this just a general perception?

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Well, St. Mary's Bay is intimately tied to the Bay of Fundy. I mean, it's all part of the same system. It can't help but have an effect on St. Mary's Bay, if it's affecting the Bay of Fundy.

I mean, there are two passages that, you know, and then it can't help but have an effect on where we live. Not maybe as much an effect as if you're on actual Digby Neck.

And you know, it's just a humane thing to do, as well. You don't want your neighbours to suffer, or to be exposed to this kind of blasting and, you know, we're thinking particularly of the sea creatures. I mean, they have no voice in the matter, so we have to give them voices.

It's just... It goes beyond art, of course. It's just artists have a voice and we want to add it to everybody else's voice.

Dr. GUNTER MUECKE: Thank you.

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE  
(QUESTIONS BY THE PROPONENT)

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: You're welcome.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Buxton?

**PRESENTATION BY LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE - QUESTIONS  
BY THE PROPONENT**

Mr. PAUL BUXTON: I don't have any questions, but could I make a short comment? Ten seconds? Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Certainly.

Mr. PAUL BUXTON: I'm not sure I quite see the incompatibility between industry engineering and the arts.

Ms. NORA ROBICHAUD: Well, we're not going to start that, but anyway.

Mr. PAUL BUXTON: Thank you. My wife is an artist. One of my business associates is a very well-known artist, and very well-bought artist, if you like, in the area. I, myself, was project manager for the Ross Creek Centre for the Arts, and Bilcon is a sponsor of the Ross Creek Centre of the Arts.

I think there can be some interchange between industry engineering and the arts. Many of my friends in this area are crafts people and artists. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Mr. Buxton.



Any questions from anyone else? Yes, please come forward Sir.

**PRESENTATION BY LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE LA BAIE - QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mr. BRIAN DYER: Mr. Chair, Ms.

Robichaud, I have a question for...

THE CHAIRPERSON: Could you identify yourself?

Mr. BRIAN DYER: Brian Dyer, no affiliation, other than a citizen of the world, a very concerned citizen when it comes to this Project. And my question is basically to the Chair, Mr., Dr. Fournier.

I believe I heard you correctly in your first question to Ms. Robichaud, and you used the expression, "Bilcon have made the Proposal to bring in jobs". I think you said "bring in jobs", Did you not?

THE CHAIRPERSON: A slip of the tongue. What I meant was bring in salaried positions; not necessarily people, if that's what you're referring to.

Mr. BRIAN DYER: Thank you. That is the gist of my question. They are promising to bring in, and this is a promise, 34 local jobs and it is my suggestion that of these 34 jobs, which cannot be filled, I am predicting, by local labour, skilled or unskilled, there