

PUBLIC HEARING

WHITES POINT QUARRY AND MARINE TERMINAL PROJECT

JOINT REVIEW PANEL

V O L U M E 8

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

PLACE HEARD: Digby, Nova Scotia

DATE HEARD: Monday, June 25, 2007

PRESENTERS: -Bilcon of Nova Scotia
Ms. Susan Sherk
-Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage
Mr. Robert Ogilvie and Ms. Darlene MacDonald
-Municipality of the District of Digby
Warden James Thurber
-Town of Annapolis Royal
Mayor John Kinsella
-Municipality of the County of Annapolis
Warden Peter Newton
-Mr. Michael Hayden
-Ms. Jan Hermiston
-Paradise Women's Institute
Ms. Phyllis Nixon and Ms. Kim Grimard
-Mr. Clytie Foster

-Fundy Fixed Gear Council
Mr. Chris Hudson
-Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - N.S.
Ms. Laura Hussey

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

1 place.

2 At the same time, if there is going to
3 be any work undertaken in that zone, it would be overseen by
4 an archaeologist, once again, operating under a Heritage
5 research permit.

6 There was another general recommendation
7 provided by Bilcon and that is that there be sensitivity
8 training for staff on site, so that they are aware of what
9 archaeological resources may look like, so that if some are
10 stumbled upon during the course of construction, that they
11 can act appropriately. And we would oversee, or at least
12 look at the training that they would put in place for that.

13 And with that, I'd like to pass it over
14 to my colleague, Darlene MacDonald, for the tourism
15 perspective.

16 Ms. DARLENE MacDONALD: Thank you, Bob.
17 I am Darlene MacDonald, Manager of Tourism Development, with
18 the Tourism Division of the Department.

19 Just to touch upon our core business
20 activities within the Tourism Division, we work closely with
21 the Tourism Partnership Council which are 14 tourism
22 industry leaders across the Province who help set direction
23 and recommendations to the Minister in regards to marketing,
24 development and research.

25 With that, we work in development and

1 planning, and in particular, that is the area which I work
2 in, so with staff, we work with community groups in building
3 destinations, attractions in developing and enhancing
4 tourism industry, private sector, and enhancing their
5 overall marketing readiness and business operations.

6 Within the Division, we are the primary
7 source of tourism marketing and promotions for the Province
8 of Nova Scotia, and with that, through our sales and
9 partnerships team, they are actively out promoting Nova
10 Scotia, and supporting our tourism brand to the travel
11 trade.

12 We also manage provincially-owned Crown
13 assets such as the facility we're sitting in, as well as
14 other Provincial Resorts, and contracts with major suppliers
15 for distribution and call centres. We also have a section
16 that collects and disseminates research based on various
17 tourism indicators, and some of them will be referenced in
18 this presentation.

19 So some of the figures as it relates to
20 tourism in Nova Scotia, provincially, tourism is a \$1.3
21 billion sector. While there have been various comments made
22 on tourism up and down, it has remained fairly consistent
23 throughout the Province over the last number of years,
24 generating \$200 million in Federal, Provincial, Municipal
25 taxes, and employing 23,800 in direct jobs, and about 9,000

1 in indirect jobs.

2 I must say that these numbers are
3 calculated through our research section that use provincial
4 economic input/output model.

5 When we look at Digby County, and that
6 is the lowest that we can take our impact model, 37.7
7 million is directed towards Digby County for tourism
8 revenues representing 5.8 million in taxes, and
9 approximately 1,000 directly into jobs.

10 Digby is an entry point to the Province,
11 and this demonstrates that in 2006, approximately 29,000
12 visitors came through Digby as one of the seven entry
13 points. It also illustrates where these markets are coming
14 through this entry point to the Province of Nova Scotia, so
15 we do see Ontario, Quebec, even some western Canada, and a
16 fair number from the U.S. regions.

17 So from a tourism perspective, and it is
18 in my section of development and planning that we provide a
19 tourism perspective on environmental assessments such as the
20 one proposed. We looked at the following considerations:
21 Transportation and materials, visual aesthetics, noise,
22 local tourism development plans, and potential growth of the
23 development.

24 In this case, has the transportation of
25 materials proposed is by marine. We feel that the whale

1 watching... Sorry, whale watching is a strong product
2 experience for the Digby area, and as such, it is one of the
3 top locations within the Province, the other two areas being
4 the Shediac/Pleasant Bay area and the other area being the
5 Halifax/Eastern Shore/Eastern Passage area.

6 With increased shipping, there is
7 potential that it may impact the already endangered species,
8 which could, in turn, impact the local whale-watching
9 sightseeing tours and businesses. As I referenced through
10 our research section, each... Sorry, every four years, we
11 conduct a visitor-exit survey, so we surveyed those people
12 leaving the Province, and in the 2004 VES surveyed, nine
13 percent of travellers participated in a boat tour for whale
14 and seabirding, watching.

15 I must say that that is not just to
16 Digby. That is a provincial, so where they took that
17 boating experience, we don't have that specific information.

18 In addition, 44 percent of travellers
19 participated in nature observation activities during their
20 visit to Nova Scotia. As such, coastal experiences such as
21 nature observation... In other words, birding and hiking...

22 May be impacted. In 2002, we hired Tom Heinz, a well-known
23 birder from Ontario to assess Nova Scotia as far as
24 potential to develop our birding experiences, and Digby Neck
25 area was one of the top three birding opportunities in the

1 Province, the other two being Sable Island and Sheffield
2 Mills from a nature observation perspective.

3 So, as such, we suggest the Proponent
4 mitigate and monitor any potential impact on whales by
5 working with experts and stakeholders in those fields. We
6 also suggest that the Proponent work with local boat tour
7 operators to mitigate any potential impact on their
8 operations, and most importantly, the visitors experiences.

9 On the visual aesthetics, we are
10 concerned of the impact on the visitors' perception and
11 experience of Nova Scotia.

12 We position Nova Scotia as pristine, a
13 natural experience. Between six percent of travellers cite
14 general coastal scenery as the main reason for choosing Nova
15 Scotia as their destination. Once again, the source is the
16 2004 Visitor Exit Survey.

17 35 percent of travellers cite general
18 coastal scenery as what they liked most about their visit to
19 Nova Scotia, remembering this is as they leave the Province.

20 So coastal experiences are not only by
21 water, but also by land, and in 1997, we conducted a marine
22 tourism study, and that was one of the key findings; that
23 much of our marine coastal experiences are experienced by
24 visitors who, whether they're doing a coastal hike, or if
25 they're launching their kayak, and do sea kayaking, or

1 they're visiting a lighthouse.

2 In particular, since 1998, we have had a
3 joint partnership with the tourism industry along the Bay of
4 Fundy, as well as the Province of New Brunswick in
5 developing and promoting the Bay of Fundy. I have provided
6 a copy to the Panel of the brochure for the ultimate Bay of
7 Fundy experience.

8 As part of the Bay of Fundy programs
9 since '98, it has evolved to include marketing, whether it
10 be direct media to target markets, as well as website
11 development, and as well as a market-readiness program for
12 operators to denote those operators that offer the ultimate
13 recommended experience on the Bay of Fundy.

14 I should note in 2006 the Bay of Fundy
15 Tourism Partnership Council received the Tourism Industry
16 Association of Canada award for sustainable development.

17 So, overall, key to tourism in Nova
18 Scotia is the integrity of our natural environment, and in
19 particular, our coastal assets.

20 It is through the Tourism Brand
21 Positioning Statement that we position and sell Nova Scotia
22 as a destination, and so we are targeting the market of
23 those people who appreciate the sea; that Nova Scotia is
24 Canada's foremost seacoast vacation destination; that offers
25 an authentic experience for your body and soul, better than

1 any other destination, because only Nova Scotia unique
2 combines spectacular scenery, living tradition, maritime
3 culture and lifestyle with a feeling of deep-down spiritual
4 satisfaction.

5 This is not a statement that you would
6 see as going out and actively putting in the marketplace,
7 but it is the behind-the-scenes position of everything that
8 we do from a marketing and development perspective, in the
9 sense that much of our messaging, as this is Nova Scotia,
10 Canada's Seacoast, and I have provided you copies of a few
11 pieces, such as the 2007 Travel Guide, and as well as the
12 2007 Outdoor Guide.

13 You will see there's very few images
14 that do not touch upon an activity or an experience that is
15 coastal-based. In addition, while I do not have copies to
16 leave, we do have a binder that offers many ad samples for
17 2007. So this is the promotional materials that are in the
18 specific geographic markets, whether it be Atlantic Canada,
19 Ontario, Quebec, Western Canada and the U.S.

20 So as such, we are concerned that this
21 development has the potential to negatively impact our
22 Provincial Tourism Brand, and this development is not
23 consistent with our international tourism promotions in
24 positioning Nova Scotia as Canada's seacoast.

25 Another consideration in respect to

1 noise, we are concerned that the noise from the quarry
2 construction, operations of the marine terminal, and
3 blasting may impact the visitors' experience; concerned that
4 increased noise from operations and shipping may impact
5 whales and create a risk for sightseeing tour operations.

6 The work we're doing in development
7 includes working with regional efforts and in this case,
8 we're working with the Digby Area Tourism Association to
9 develop their planning from a tourism destination area
10 perspective, and one of the areas that they've identified is
11 the importance of serving as stewards for their ecosystems.

12 And in conclusion, the potential growth
13 of the development, given the location on the Bay of Fundy,
14 which we consider to be an important destination, with
15 potential for Nova Scotia, consideration should be given on
16 the impact to the visitors' perception and experience should
17 be considered.

18 And given the whale-watching experience
19 is a strong component for the area, consideration of the
20 potential impact on this business activity. And should
21 ongoing expansion be... Should be monitored carefully as
22 potential growth for such a small geographic area may impact
23 on tourism experiences north and south of the area.

24 And I guess that formally concludes the
25 presentation of the Department.

1 **NOVA SCOTIA TOURISM CULTURE AND HERITAGE - QUESTIONS FROM**
2 **THE PANEL**

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.
4 Do you want to go?

5 Dr. JILL GRANT: I'd like to start with
6 some questions to Mr. Ogilvie. The report by the
7 Confederation of Mainland Mi'Kmaq identified concerns about
8 an Indian hill camp on the site. Are you satisfied that the
9 archaeological study was thorough enough to determine
10 whether there was such a feature on the site?

11 Mr. ROBERT OGILVIE: We were satisfied
12 with the level of investigation done on the site.

13 It's a very difficult site to look at,
14 being treed and so on and so forth, but that particular area
15 is not expected to have a high potential for this type of
16 thing.

17 There is potential that there could well
18 be something out there which wasn't discovered because the
19 nature of archaeological remains is that they do tend to be
20 hidden until they're discovered, but we are confident in the
21 methodology that was used.

22 Dr. JILL GRANT: And if there were, at
23 one time, a small settlement at Whites Cove, as some of the
24 community members suggest, is it likely to have occurred in
25 the coastal plain area, the part that may have been already