WHITES POINT QUARRY AND MARINE TERMINAL PROJECT

JOINT REVIEW PANEL

SCOPING MEETING #1

HEARD BEFORE: Dr. Robert Fournier, Chairperson
               Dr. Jill Grant, Member
               Dr. Gunter Muecke, Member

PLACE HEARD: Sandy Cove, Nova Scotia

DATE HEARD: Thursday, January 6, 2005

SECRETARIAT: Mr. Stephen Chapman, CEAA
              Ms. Lucille Jamault, CEAA
              Mr. Peter Geddes, NSEL

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Per: Mark Aurini, Commissioner of Oaths
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culture as well as the residents' sense of place and spiritual values will be included in the Revised Guidelines for the assessment of the impacts of this project in these factors.

The fifth point, regarding the sections dealing with human health, human health, issues to do with mental health appear to be understated. It does not need to be said, but this project has already had impacts on the wellbeing of the residents of Little River. Specialists in the area of community mental health should be broadly consulted in order to ensure residents that possible additional impacts will in fact be inventoried and accounted for within the Environmental Impact Statement.

The sixth point, which is the final of the six points I'd like to make tonight, without question Little River is an extraordinary example of successful local economies. Certainly there are those of us in Little River who feel at times we should be punished for that. But without question Little River is an extraordinary example of successful local economy.

Those who are not directly engaged in the various economic enterprises in the village

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MR. SHARPE – SUBMISSIONS

EIS Guidelines represent components drawn together from national guidance, from provincial guidance and materials from previous panel reviews, but we feel there's considerable room for improvement with these Guidelines. From this point forward in the process, we encourage the panel members to take ownership of these Guidelines and revise the Guidelines to reflect their considerable expertise and experience with environmental assessments.

The Society believes that sustainable development and the fundamental principles of sustainability, particularly the precautionary principle, are missing or absent from the Draft Guidelines at present. Previous panel reviews, particularly the panel review for the Voisey's Bay mine and the panel review for the Red Hill Creek Expressway, have explicitly recognized the importance of sustainable development in the environmental assessment and provided their own interpretation of the role of sustainable development and some of its key principles.

The approach that these panel reviews have taken -- has taken have helped provide clear direction to the Proponent on what the panel expected and how the environmental assessment
should be undertaken. I think it's important to note that both the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and the Nova Scotia Environmental Assessment Regulations include explicit reference to sustainable development, and I think it therefore falls within the remit of this panel to ensure that the Final EIS Guidelines reflect the central nature of sustainable development to this environmental assessment.

We'd further ask that the panel consider inclusion of the precautionary principle within the Final Guidelines. The precautionary principle again has been incorporated into previous panel reviews, and we think it provides an important context of how the Proponent should deal with scientific uncertainty.

Section 2 of the Draft EIS Guidelines provides a list of information that the Proponent must provide or include in the EIS Guidelines. Item "B" of that list is the need for the project.

We have reviewed the guidance, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Operational Policy Statement that addresses the need for the project and found this guidance to be
Without an explicit definition, it appears possible that the environmental effects of the project (vis-a-vis socioeconomic effects) may be deemed acceptable from a federal vantage but unacceptable from a provincial point of view. This would appear to make it difficult for the provincial and federal government to reach a consensus and issue a joint statement concerning the project at the completion of the environmental assessment.

This panel needs to consider taking a new, more appropriate and valid approach to the study of social impacts of the proposed project. It needs to identify appropriate social measures (including but not limited to way of life and enjoyment of life or property, and encompassing various elements that comprise quality of life and the social fabric of affected communities). The Proponent must then be required to examine the potential impacts on those measures.

(The work of Dr. Colman of Dalhousie University in developing Social Progress Indicators that identify approximately 20 variables related to social impacts might be a good starting point for the panel's deliberation).
particular island was covered by the sea. Hence, it was passed down from generation to generation that when you felt a tremor, to run for the hills. That is exactly what these islanders did just a week and a half ago, and their lives were saved. So please, let us not underestimate the great wisdom of folklore.

I would like to refer to 9.2.7, "Human Health," in the Draft Guidelines. I was a registered nurse, and it pleases me to say we in Little River have a very healthy thriving community, and the sea has been very good to us. Per capita, we are probably considered a somewhat affluent community. To risk our way of life for a few menial jobs does not make sense to me. Not only is it not economically feasible, it is not advantageous to the health standards of our community nor to the mental health of our residents, always worrying about our water supply. Fresh water is one of the most important commodities on the face of this earth today, and again I say we cannot afford to gamble with this most important commodity. I urge you again to please use the precautionary principle.

Thank you for this opportunity to
provide strong evidence that a significant majority
of people on Digby Neck want this project to
happen.

And you may be saying, well, this
project -- or thinking, this project is not about
-- the guidelines are not about taking referendums
or polls and so forth. But again, the logic is, if
a key determinant of socioeconomic wellbeing is
ability to participate in decision-making process,
and if these guidelines address socioeconomic
wellbeing, therefore, the Guidelines must address
this question and specifically must ask the
Proponent to demonstrate that most people want this
to happen. Again, a key point for us.

And I will just add finally that
we strongly believe also that the precautionary
principle needs to be clearly embedded in the
Guidelines. It needs to be there for the Proponent
too. It needs to be there so that they know where
the bar is, so that if they come forward and say,
"Well, we think perhaps this might be the case,"
that is a level of uncertainty which will trigger
the precautionary principle. In other words, we
don't know. Therefore, we must be cautious. It's
in the Oceans Act as one of the three guiding