

Cornwall Community Discussion Summary

Tuesday, April 8th, 2014

6:30 – 9:00pm

Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Ave

Overview

On April 8th, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) hosted the last of seven Community Discussions in Part One of its Energy East Consultation Process. The purpose of these Community Discussions is to provide a forum for local residents and organizations to tell the Province of Ontario their perspectives on the potential impacts (both positive and negative) of TransCanada PipeLines Limited's proposed Energy East Pipeline.

Approximately 60 people attended the Cornwall Community Discussion, including representatives of environmental organizations, construction companies, unions, community associations, agriculture, and oil/gas industry. Representatives of the Ontario Ministry of Energy and TransCanada Pipelines Limited also attended. About half of the participants did not indicate they were affiliated with any organization.

All feedback received in Part One of the OEB's Energy East Consultation will be included in a Part One Consultation Summary Report that will be written by the independent facilitation team. This report will be used by the OEB and its technical advisors to help inform their assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed Energy East Pipeline. The OEB will share and seek feedback on their understanding of the impacts in Part Two of the Energy East Consultation.

This summary was written by Swerhun Facilitation, a third-party facilitation firm that the OEB has hired to provide independent facilitation services for community discussions and stakeholder meetings. This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting and instead provides a high level summary of the perspectives and advice provided by participants during the facilitated discussion.

This summary was subject to participant review prior to being finalized.

High-Level Summary of Feedback

Note points are numbered for ease of reference only.

- 1. There were concerns about the impacts of the proposed Energy East pipeline on local waterways, aquifers, and the Rideau Canal UNESCO World Heritage Site.** Some of the specific concerns mentioned by participants focused on the pipeline's proposed crossing of the Nepean aquifer (which municipalities access via deeper wells) and the Oxford aquifer (which local communities rely on for drinking water supplied by shallow wells). The area is considered highly vulnerable due to thin soils and rocks with many fractures, and past contamination of local wells (by dry cleaning solvent) in Manotick resulted in the town having to pipe in clean drinking water. Manotick continues to pipe its water from Ottawa, because the local water supply still isn't safe 22 years later. Some participants felt that the Energy East project was inconsistent with Ontario's Green Energy and Economy Act. One participant observed that Canada is currently importing significant amounts of oil by water, that there is an environmental risk associated with that activity, and that this environmental risk could be reduced or eliminated through the development of the Energy East pipeline.
- 2. Participants had different perspectives on the job potential associated with the proposed pipeline and the trickle down economic benefits.** Some participants viewed the proposed pipeline as a nation building project on the scale of the St. Lawrence Seaway and felt that it would provide a comparable and important boost to the local economy, both directly through local jobs and indirectly through local spending by the workers. These participants made the point that the Cornwall area has among the lowest family income levels in Ontario, is economically depressed, and significant construction projects – like the pipeline – are few and far between. Others disagreed, sharing their view that the jobs would be short-term only, would likely go to non-local workers, and that big industry have historically “kept this area down” because of the pollution they've left behind.

- 3. Opportunities for job creation through non-fossil fuel energy projects was recognized by those supporting the pipeline as well as those opposed.** Participants discussed the need for federal leadership and investment in weaning Canadians from our current carbon-dependent society to a green energy society. One participant notes that if Canada were to prioritize upgrading millions of homes to LEED standards, for example, there would also be a significant investment in private sector training and an opportunity for local Ontario jobs. Another participant mentioned that TransCanada had taken the lead in the area of building solar farms in Eastern Ontario, and saw other promising trends on the horizon that could one day have them serving ‘a different, cleaner energy master.’ A third participant felt that the proposed Energy East pipeline would provide a level of energy security as Canada transitions towards greener energy sources.
- 4. Some participants raised concerns regarding the safety record of TransCanada, while others credited the commitment of TransCanada to corporate social responsibility and safety.** Those comfortable with TransCanada referred to the public, worker, and environmental safety commitments of the company along with funds the company dedicates to social issues and the company’s contribution to taxes. One participant raised the point that this financial benefit goes to municipalities and that local landowners whose properties the pipeline passes through do not see any benefit – they can’t deduct the taxes paid by the oil company from their own property tax bill. Those with concerns referenced a culture of non-compliance and a recent NEB audit in which TransCanada was found non-compliant in four of nine areas investigated. Concern was also expressed about how an engineer with TransCanada was treated after revealing his concerns about the company’s activity. Finally the volume of oil proposed to be moved through the Energy East pipeline is so large that even with a 99.99% safety record, the 0.01% releases of product represents a significant volume.
- 5. There were concerns about who would be financially responsible for cleaning up any spills.** There were participants who said “we don’t want to see the privatization of gains and the socialization of losses”. Suggestions included ensuring that a huge “kitty” is set aside in trust by TransCanada to address accidents (for example, if there’s a leak near the Rideau Canal then thousands of wells would be polluted for years) and/or some other type of financial guarantees. Concerns were raised about the ability of companies to declare bankruptcy and eliminate their contribution to clean up.
- 6. Other concerns regarding the proposed Energy East pipeline included:**
 - The environmental impacts of increasing Ontario’s reliance on fracked gas, and the potential economic impacts of price increases in natural gas (which are expected to accompany strengthened environmental regulations related to fracking).
 - The inaccessibility of the NEB to the public, particularly when a 9 page document needs to be completed before the public can write a letter to the NEB.
 - Concern about the adequacy of emergency response efforts.
 - Concern that building pipelines commits Canada to an unsustainable energy future that will need to operate for decades before the investors see a return on their infrastructure investment.

Next Steps

Participants were thanked for their feedback and reminded that they have until April 30th, 2014 to share their perspectives on the potential impacts of TransCanada’s proposed Energy East Pipeline in Ontario. To provide additional feedback, Ontarians can visit the Energy East Consultation website (www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/oebenergyeast) and fill out a discussion guide or send in written submissions.

All of the feedback received in Part One of the Energy East Consultation will be summarized in a report and used by the OEB and its Technical Advisors to inform their work in preparation for Part Two of the Energy East Consultation. Part Two Community Discussions are expected to take place in July/August 2014 after TransCanada Pipelines Limited’s full application to the NEB is available.