

## **Weavers Mountain Wind Energy Project Virtual Community Engagement Session Question & Answer Transcript**

The Virtual Community Engagement Session for the proposed Weavers Mountain Wind Energy Project was held on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 from 6:30 – 8:00pm. The below transcript is a record of the questions and answers raised during the session.

### **Did I understand the project will be on the West side of the Keppoch Road? How much will be in Antigonish County and how much in Pictou County?**

*We have a sizeable portion of land signed up that span both Pictou and Antigonish Counties. Currently, its tough to provide exact percentages as to how much of the project will fall into which county without doing the final environmental studies to really determine if there is anything on the ground that we need to be aware of when placing turbines. The final turbine placement will come at a later date but right now the plan is for at least some infrastructure in both counties.*

### **Will there be a Mi'kmaq Ecological Survey?**

*We have been engaging Membertou Geomatics for about 2 – 3 months about setting up some scoping for a Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge Study. This group is fairly busy at the moment, but we anticipate that this whole process will start in the early summer and take some time to finish up in terms of the interviews and site visits. This process is in place for all of our projects in our portfolio.*

### **Where are you in terms of the development agreement process with the municipality(s)?**

*We have been in contact with Pictou and Antigonish Counties independently on this project since the summer of 2021. We have reviewed the local requirements. We would typically apply for these types of permit agreements once the projects get more progressed and the layout has been “crystallized”. This will be something that occurs over the next couple of months. We will look to establish those permit applications and submissions within the summer months.*

### **Your website speaks a lot about community partners... who are they?**

*There are two types of community partners. The first type of community partners is those who have a share in the project. They will own the project with us. We have previously worked heavily with Municipalities on this type of agreement. Unfortunately, this Municipality ownership structure was taken from us by the Program Administrator and the Government of Nova Scotia for the Rate Based Program. However, we are currently in negotiations with First Nations groups who have shown interest in owning a stake in the project. We are not able to disclose details on this agreement at this point in time. However, we will share details as soon as the ink is dry.*

*The second type of community partner is those groups who represented the underrepresented. These underrepresented groups would receive a share of revenue. The project will give funds to certain non-profit organizations who will put them to good use. We are currently working with three of these partners – a First Nation group, an advocacy group for women in renewable energy and an advocacy group for the African Nova Scotian community. We will post details on these partners as soon as they are known.*

*In addition, we are working with other groups from the local project community who could also use funds from our projects. We would like to support groups who are directly neighbouring our project.*

**I saw on the RBP timeline that March 14 was the date for submitting an Intent to Bid. Would it be fair to assume that you've submitted an Intent to Bid?**

*Yes, we have submitted an Intent to Bid for this project. However, the Intent to Bid is non-binding in that the details of the project can change between now until the submission deadline in early May. The Intent to Bid is for the Program Administrator to get a sense of the number of bids that will be received but does not lock project details.*

**What will be the responsibility or liability of project partners? For example, if there were accidents, forest fires, etc.?**

*The Project will be liable for anything that is not done correctly or has a negative impact on the environment. It depends on what exactly happens and how, however we will be held responsible and will be liable. Furthermore, we will have insurance in place. All large projects have millions of dollars in insurance coverage should something happen. All projects are contractually required to have insurance to cover an array of incidents. If there is concern that the project owner or Proponent is unwilling or unable to pay for remediation, then the insurance surety will take over.*

**If SWEB went out of business before decommissioning, would any of the partners be liable for costs?**

*Great question. This question has come up before throughout Nova Scotia in connection with other developers' projects. We will have an agreement with NSPI and it does contractually require that we decommission the turbines after their useful life. This means we are contractually obliged to have some form of security in place with NSPI (Letter of Credit, Bank Guarantee, etc.). If we want the surety returned, then we must fulfill the obligations of the PPA with NSPI which includes decommissioning.*

*Essentially, the owner of the project would be liable and responsible for everything. We hope that with the security in place, the community can rest assured that we will decommission the turbines. However, we appreciate and understand that this has been an issue in other parts of the province in the past. It should be noted that we have our North American headquarters in Halifax – so our employees are around. Please call us if there are any questions or concerns issue.*

*Additionally, the raw materials of the turbines have a significant value. We have decommissioned turbines in Europe where we received money to have someone pick up our turbines and decommission them for us. Ultimately, there is an advantage in decommissioning.*

**Back on the local non profit organizations getting some benefit from the Project profits topic - Is there a way to apply to get these funds as a community non profit that will be affected?**

*We are currently in discussions with the Keppoch Society. We have an interest in working with that local community group because a lot of us use Keppoch ourselves and one of our team members is from the area. More information will come on this when known.*

*We invite the community to tell us if you have any ideas of where we can put funds into good use, please reach out. We have worked with numerous Community Liaison Committees (CLCs) who have received funds from our projects in the past. These CLCs have supported some incredible community benefits.*

**Will the turbines selected be (preferably) made in Canada?**

*Generally speaking, there are different tiers of turbine suppliers. Typically, we would use a tier 1 supplier. There are only a few turbine manufacturers that belong to the tier 1 group. Unfortunately, there are limited ways to oblige our supplier to source certain components within Canada. Those suppliers are international companies who have factories across the world. Furthermore, the suppliers would only know about a year or year and a half before the project begins where the components come from.*

*One important thing to note is that as part of the RFP, we are obligated to meet certain standards and criteria with the equipment used. Very few turbine suppliers can meet those criteria; they are very high standards. The manufacturers that meet said criteria do have manufacturing plants typically in the mid-west US. While some components of the turbines will come out of Europe. Steel towers will often come from China or other similar locations. It's unfortunately out of SWEB's control to select which materials would come directly from Canada. However, something that does come from Canada for these projects is rebar and concrete. We use a significant amount of rebar and concrete. The concrete would come from a local company here in Nova Scotia. The rebar could come from a rebar supplier in the maritime region. Although, there are not a lot of rebar suppliers in Eastern Canada specifically.*

*Proponents are asked to show their plans of how they will provide benefits to the local economy in the RFP. We hope that SWEB will be able to show the benefits to Nova Scotia. We are based here in the province, and we work heavily with those also based here. The turbines themselves apart, we are confident this project will provide a significant benefit to the local economy.*

**Your two projects in Massachusetts have very interesting environmental aspects (pollinator-attractive grasses and grazing of sheep). Anything like this planned for Weavers Mountain?**

*The pollinator element is more common for solar PV projects because a typical wind project, specifically turbine bases, may only use 5% of the total project area. Each turbine would take about a hectare of land after construction. We would have to keep this hectare quite clear because we need access to the turbine. Everything around the footprint we leave to regenerate naturally. Sometimes if it's Crown land, the Crown will request a natural regeneration. We don't normally add additional pollination aspects in a wind project, especially given the existing land cover is normally forested.*

*Same with grazing of sheep. This is more common when we're using farmland for solar PV. Again, the Weavers Mountain project has a forested land cover. There is active forestry practice on the site right now.*

**I noticed your North American projects are very small compared to what's proposed here. Have you ever completed a project of this size?**

*Yes, the projects we have built and are currently operating in North America are smaller. However, we have a number of projects in development in the US of significant size. Additionally, our parent company based in Europe has projects of significant size. Within Canada, we have developed sites that are as*

large, or larger. We have a site called the Black Spruce Wind Energy Project that was co-developed with Black & Macdonald and was one of the projects selected as part of a larger procurement to send wind energy down to the US. As such, we do have experience with larger projects.

Furthermore, every year the capacity of the turbines increases. This means the capacity of a 100 MW project may be larger than the average total MW capacity size of our operating projects, but the number of turbines required is similar. Its not too different to jump from a seven 2MW turbine project to a twelve 5MW turbine project. The key difference here is in the construction timeline.

As a company we are tracking the change in the market. The market is trending towards larger projects to decrease the cost of energy.

Lastly, in any given year, across our broader team, we've commissioned 90 – 110 MW as a group. It is a much more complex beast to finance and commission a number of projects across numerous jurisdictions.

**When do you suspect you will have a better idea of the number of turbines as well as location of them?**

We plan to follow the timeline of the RFP. We anticipate a strong plan of record layout by end of April. This layout will be carried through the environmental assessment process. All the layout information will be published both through our website as well as through the NS Environment website.

**Continuing Discussions – please reach out to us if you have any further questions or feedback**

Jason Parisé

Senior Development Manager

Office: +1 902-431-0564 ext.261

Mobile: +1 902-329-1494

[weavers@sweb.energy](mailto:weavers@sweb.energy)

[www.weaversmountainwindenergy.ca](http://www.weaversmountainwindenergy.ca)

SWEB Development LP

6080 Young St, Suite 403

Halifax, NS

B3K 5L2

Office: (902) 431-0564

Toll Free: +1 (844) 468 3134

[contact@sweb.energy](mailto:contact@sweb.energy)

[www.sweb.energy](http://www.sweb.energy)

All project information is available for review in our Halifax office at 6080 Young Street, Suite 403 and can be mailed upon request