

Kahnawà:ke Sustainable Wind Energy Project  
Brief Filing  
June 11, 2015

Kwe (Greetings),

My name is Tracey Kari'wa:iens Diabo and I am of the Bear clan from the Kahnawá:ke Mohawk Community. I am the Social Development Coordinator for the Community Policy on Social Responsibility and Self Sufficiency for Kahnawà:ke. I would like to express my opinion about the St. Cyprien wind farm which my community is currently developing in the nearby community of Saint-Cyprien-de-Napierville.

I believe this is a very important economic and environmental project for our community and for the host community. The economic sustainability is unquestionable: based on the funds the project will generate over the course of 20 or more years. We have worked very hard to diversify our economy and develop mechanisms that can support our social services and infrastructure and all the unmet needs in our community such as language, culture, youth, elders, sports, underfunded social programs, and the list goes on. This project will have far tangible outcomes and impacts in all areas of our community.

Similarly, this project can potentially stimulate the economy of the city of Saint-Cyprien-de-Napierville. With the land owners being handsomely compensated \$3.5 million and the municipality receiving \$2.4 million. Such capital can potentially increase disposable income within their own community and support their underfunded programs, services, and/or infrastructure. Much like the success of the Kruger project in St-Remi, such a venture can generate tourism within the municipality.

The wind energy project is in line with our traditional relations, roles and responsibilities to Mother the Earth. The developmental sustainability aspect of the project is congruent with our philosophy of making decisions and planning for the future generations. It is a relatively small project (8 turbines) and the site is ideal because of the wind, the existing roads, and the direct connection that can be made to the existing Hydro Québec grid. Although we hear about the "energy surplus" issue and the argument that we don't need more electricity, I think it is important to put this project and wind energy, in general, into a larger perspective. Energy needs will always be growing, and energy grids are interconnected, so whatever we do here in our backyard will help counter environmental problems on a larger scale. It will reduce our carbon print.

I am unable to understand why some Saint-Cyprien citizens and the surrounding regions are not supportive of the wind energy project when our neighbours, the people of St-Remi and many other areas around the world, live within reasonable distances from the turbines with a very good quality of life. In the case of the St-Cyprien project, the turbines will be more than 750 meters from any homes—and most homes are more than 1 kilometer away.

Wind energy is one of the cleanest energies productions. In the numerous articles I've read regarding wind energy, they were also considered the least intrusive to the environment in comparison to nuclear energy and the mega-hydroelectric dams that have destroyed entire communities, the environment, and the way of life for First Nations peoples in Northern Québec.

Regarding employment opportunities, my understanding is that this project will generate approximately 50 - 75 jobs to be shared between Kahnawà:ke and the host region—another potential opportunity to stimulate the St. Cyprien economy. Erecting the turbines requires the skills of ironworkers for which we have many men in that industry. In fact, many Kahnawà:ke ironworkers were fortunate to work on erecting the turbines for the Kruger project and could be involved, again, in the St. Cyprien project. Like the Kruger project in our backyard, the St. Cyprien project will become a source of pride for our people and add to Kahnawa'kehró:non ironworking history.

Should the project go through, I hope the people of the region can understand and be open to other perspectives on wind energy just like our people have had to adjust for centuries to the changes taking place in the world around us. I hope and believe that we can develop good relationships with our neighbours, despite our difference of opinions on wind energy and other issues. Based on all the points in my letter, I strongly recommend that this project be approved as-is.

I would suggest that in terms of corporate social responsibility and capacity building a derivative be stipulated concerning the project revenues. An academic scholarship should be set aside to support students in the science, technology, engineering and technology (STEM) academic fields.

Nia:wen (Thank you),

Tracey K. Diabo  
Kahnawà:ke Social Development Coordinator

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