

The AUC asked Albertan's for their opinions during the moratorium on renewable projects. If you watched or listened to the presentations the common topic was the disregard these companies had for residents who opposed the location of a project. The government including municipalities are burdened with the task of deciding what is acceptable and what is reasonable. I believe the problem can be solved in 2 simple steps by giving the power back to the residents and to the counties/municipalities.

> 1) Get Permission. If a company wants to build an industrial type project on a piece of land, they need permission from the landowner AND those within a kilometer of the project. WHY? Because it shows respect for the residents, currently if there are rare species of plants, or endangered wildlife, or indigenous grounds the project is put on hold. But the actual residents within close proximity are not a bonafied reason to halt a project. Now if the company has to get permission from all residents it will realize if this project is wanted in this particular area. If the residents agree, perfect the project goes ahead. However, if the company cannot get the permission from the neighbours the project should be in a better location.

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> Should I have the right to decide what my neighbour does with his property? Absolutely, if :

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> a) the project will affect my quality of life, or lower my property value, or endanger my health

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> b) the project is in excess of 1 million dollars
(now we are rezoning agricultural land into industrial land.)

> "owners of power plants with a capability of one megawatt or greater and less than 10 megawatts that are generating electric energy solely for the owner's own use can proceed without filing an application with the AUC, if all of the following criteria are satisfied. No person is directly and adversely affected" - bulletin 2022-04 with the AUC. So why does this apply only to small projects, but not large ones?

> 2) Allow the municipalities to decide if agricultural land should be rezoned to industrial land. Which is basically what is happening when you take producing agricultural land and build a power plant. The municipalities and the people in charge know which land should and should not be moved from agricultural to industrial. We need to trust those closest to the affected lands to make the right decisions before it is granted a license from the provincial government.

I will now elaborate on a project that is close to our home and will change our quality of life forever as well as the next generation. Obton, a Danish power company, is building a 300 acre power plant in amongst the only homes in our sparsely populated part of the county. They did not acknowledge that people will be living beside their plant, because of the current regulations they do not have to. They choose an absentee landowner, who lives in another county, because they knew he would be agreeable and the land is close to a power line. The residents didn't matter because the current regulations do not require permission. By people, I mean farms that have been here over 100 years and cannot move and helped to build this province. However, they have done searches on the land for unique species of plants,

because the regulations require them to. They did search for specific species of animals, because they had to. These studies all take time and for this reason they will not consider relocating, even when offered similar or less producing land at a fraction of the rent. BESS (Battery Electrical Storage Systems. Electrical hazards are present in each BESS type due to the power control systems for grid integration. Lithium-ion battery cells vent combustible gases under abnormal conditions. Hydrogen fluoride, HF, hydrogen cyanide (HCN) are toxic gases vented from the battery found in BESS in thermal runaway events (Gully, 2019)). Fires and explosions are occurring more often as more BESS systems are developed. (75 recently according to Wikipedia). A bomb is made by storing energy, a BESS system should not be located near people when the option is available to build it away from residents. This BESS would be located near two water ways which flow into the massive and beautiful Paintearth coulee, it may or may not have an accident, but if it ever did it would be very difficult to contain the damage in a valley so deep it has little access.

With these examples it should be clear what is wrong with the current regulations, the affected people do not have a say until the appeal process. These projects need to be approved on a county/municipality basis in the very early stages. If a better location is found it needs to be quick and easy to relocate, assuming the land is similar. I belong to a group of neighbours called the RSL group (responsible solar locations) no one in our group is against green energy, but we think it is an oxymoron when a company claims to have the best interests of the people in mind i.e. green energy, however is willing to step on the toes of those who will be negatively affected by

the project.

Why did wind projects in our area, Halkirk 2 (north of Halkirk) take so long to get approval and have a long appeal process? Basically because the power company never consulted with all of the people affected. In this community there were people who wanted wind turbines and those who didn't. What the power company did was turn these people, who were good friends and neighbours into bitter enemies something that will never be re bridged.

Many years ago I read that when wind turbines were being built in the US on farm land they tried to put only 1 or 2 on every farm as a subsidy for the farmer. I still think this is a great idea. The other very simple, reasonable plan would be to show the entire community a drawing of where they would "like" to place the turbines, if people object to a particular location or simply do not want them on their land, remove them. In other words, start with lots, and in a couple hours you'd know if this community was a fit for your project. In the case of the power plant being built across the road from me, beside two major waterways that run into my property, if the company would have shown 3-5 possible locations, I believe they could have found a location with almost zero objection. Because now the people will recognize or see that perhaps this location is the least obtrusive of the 5. THEN start planning the project.

I know this sounds too easy and too simple, but perhaps that is why it would work. I would help my county and province in anyway I could if it would help the people most affected.

> Thank you for considering our opinions,

JD and Sandra Johnson