



PLANNING STRATEGY

Marilyn Bartlett, Walter Scott, John Minns and Patrick Devine plan strategy at the Ontario Municipal Board hearing into their proposed hydro corridor through Halton Hills. (Herald photo)

OMB week in review

Tuesday, January 2:

Hearing begins, Ontario Hydro calls John Bousfield, a professional planner, as first witness. Mr. Bousfield says Hydro's proposed corridor route down the fifth concession in Halton Hills is the best of several alternative routes considered.

Wednesday, January 3:

John Bousfield continues his testimony; Ontario Hydro concludes its case.

Douglas Farrugan testifies - as an "interested person" - as to the reasons why a proposed hydro-transportation corridor concept was abandoned;

also testifying as an interested person, vegetable farmer Dave Moffat outlines concern over the possibility that the hydro lines may electrify irrigation pipes on his rural Georgetown farm;

Halton Hills' deputy planning director Brian Kropf testifies as a witness for the town that the hydro lines would violate the official plan's goal of preserving existing natural environment for aesthetic and agricultural reasons;

power systems economics planner Kenneth Slater is called by the town to testify that routes from the Bruce plant to Essa are superior than the route chosen for the Bruce to Milton corridor.

Thursday, January 4:

Slater concludes testimony;

The Interested Citizens' Group's first witness is University of Guelph zoology professor Dr. Frederick Gilbert, who says there have been inadequate studies of the corridors environmental impact;

Standards engineer and local farmer Walter Scott testifies on behalf of the ICG that overhead wires and induced voltage from the line could affect animals and machinery.

Friday, January 5:

Walter Scott completes testimony;

Bruce Howlett, expert in environmental studies and author of the EHL report used by the 1973 Salandti commission in choosing power line routes is called by Halton region, testifies that his report is now out of date and says the proposed route should be re-examined.

Monday, January 8:

The ICG calls farmer Williams Hodges, a director and former president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture who outlines his group's opposition to the routing of any hydro lines across class A or B farmland;

Farmers Leonard Manion, Reford Gardhouse, Clarence Coles, Ernest Wilson and Elmer Echlin are called as witnesses for the ICG and detail their experiences or anticipated experiences of having hydro wires cross their farmland;

ICG vice-chairman John Minns testifies that Ontario will not need the added power for which the hydro corridor was planned until 1983.

Tuesday, January 9:

Ontario Hydro calls witnesses to refute Mr. Minns' testimony.

High-voltage hydro wires may hamper animal breeding

The induced voltage generated by high-voltage transmission lines causes electrical shocks that could seriously hamper the raising and breeding of farm animals, safety standards expert Walter Scott told the OMB Thursday.

An RR3 Georgetown farm owner and co-chairman of the ICG's Halton Hills committee, Mr. Scott warned the OMB that high-voltage lines such as the 500,000-volt Bruce to Milton corridor now under consideration will pose serious hazards to all kinds of farm activity being carried out in the vicinity of the towers and lines.

The possibility that livestock could receive electrical shocks while grazing in moist pastures near the lines can be alleviated by fencing the corridor off completely, Mr. Scott conceded. He noted, though, that Hydro offers no deals in fencing expropriated land.

FARMSAFETY

Retained as a consultant in farm safety standards throughout North America, Mr. Scott reported that farm animals which receive shocks at inopportune times can become discouraged from breeding, nursing and feeding.

He further reported that he himself received a "severe shock" from touching the roof of his car, where induced voltage had collected after he drove beneath the overhead wires of a corridor running from Essa, near Barrie, to the Toronto area. The corridor is identified by Hydro as its only presently-active 500,000-volt line. Mr. Scott claimed that the shock produced both headache and nausea.

North American farms, but under subsequent questioning by Hydro lawyer John Parkinson admitted that his state-

ment needed qualifying.

He explained that the American Society of Agricultural Engineering, in its ongoing programme for the prevention of farm deaths, has singled out overhead wires in general as "a major concern" and a top priority for investigation. Mr. Scott acknowledged that he has heard of no deaths being caused by Hydro's only designated 500,000-volt line between Essa and Toronto, but pointed out that there have been reports of physical injury and machinery problems.

Mr. Scott testified that there is "no practical way" to

ensure that farm machinery operating in the vicinity of high-tension lines will be safe. The same applies to gasoline cans being used for refueling and irrigation systems with metallic pipe and components, he said.

Displaying a slide photograph showing the caution sign posted on towers by Ontario Hydro, Mr. Scott contended that the 13.5-foot maximum vehicle height limit stipulated on the sign is far too low by today's standards. Locally, he explained, farmers are using vehicular machinery that ranges in height from 40 to 50 feet,

a size factor that has been steadily increasing because there are fewer workers on modern farms.

SAFETY GAP

He added that, as well as the vehicle's physical height, Hydro should take into account a "safety gap" distance that should be allowed between the top of the machinery and the lowest point on the overhead wires. Antennae which many farm vehicles carry these days is another factor involved, he said.

Mr. Scott initially told the OMB that high-voltage corridors have become one of the primary causes of death on

Halton Hills farmer worries about children

Halton Hills farmer Dave Moffat told the OMB hydro corridor hearings Wednesday that he would have serious fears for the safety of his children if the proposed 500-kilovolt power transmission lines are built adjacent to his property.

Mr. Moffat presented the board with a brief detailing hydro line safety. He said that a standard 30 foot aluminum irrigation lateral insulatively supported in line, 45 feet below a 500 kv conductor will have an induced, no load voltage approximating 900 volts, as substantiated at the Essa, Ontario demonstration centre.

USES PIPES

Mr. Moffat said he uses such pipes for irrigating his land

and it would take more than two dozen such lateral pipes to irrigate a one acre strip of land.

He said his children often help him move his pipes around his 20 acre vegetable farm and, with the proposed hydro towers in place, he would worry about their safety.

Hydro has admitted to having no previous experience in 500kv multicorridor bulk transmission using double circuit towers, he said, thus the degree of hazard to people operating under or adjacent to the broad electrified zone around such a corridor may only be determined after the line is fully energized and

loaded.

TOLD BOARD

Mr. Moffat also reminded the board that it is a federal offence to jam public broadcasts. Overhead transmission lines produce more and more interference as the surfaces become pitted with age. Interference increases sharply above 220kv and becomes almost four-fold between 550 and 755kv, he said, and even higher levels were allowable within three miles of a station such as the Milton switching station. Since the area is rural television reception is by old-fashioned antenna, not cable, he pointed out, and the CNCT antenna has already been relocated to the top of Rattlesnake Point directly as a result of the 500KV grid. It is probable that the CBL transmission tower at Hornby will also have to be relocated and there are also other major installations slightly farther away.

Mr. Moffat also pointed out that the designated foul weather approach to Milton International Airport follows roughly parallel to the Milton to Clarendonville 500KV corridor for nearly 20 miles prior to touchdown. This is only a foul weather route and pilots using it may expect to rely totally on instruments and yet permissible interference levels are maximum on this route and it will only be used during bad weather when interference may be very great due to corona discharge, insular leakage and line hardware sparking.

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The OMB hearings lineup

Hearing officers

Henry Stewart - chairman

William Dyer

Ontario Hydro lawyers-supporting the hydro corridor

John Parkinson - chief counsel

Arthur D. Gardiner

Lawyers representing those opposed to the corridor through Halton Hills

Frederick A. Helson - representing the town of Halton Hills
Kenneth S. Anderson - representing Halton region

Patrick J. Devine - representing the Interested Citizens Group

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