

## **A Final Appeal June 18, 2012 - Mike Webb, Bala**

Good morning Madam Mayor and Council.

My name is Michael Webb PO Box 636 Bala ON P0C 1A0

Well here I am once again appealing for common sense to prevail with the same story as before but this time...perhaps too late! Never-the-less, I believe there just might be time to have this power plant built in the location the folks of Bala wanted it to be ...if it was indeed going to be built.

I feel strongly that the province's mandate will prevail and there will be a hydro plant built in Bala despite the organized protests from Save the Bala Falls.

There really is only one thing on the table for the Township to decide... where the plant will be built. Option 1 or Option 2, plane and simple.

All of the environmental factors that have been studied, ruled on and recently upheld by the province are virtually identical for either location. Fish spawning habits and habitats, scenic water flow, water levels, fencing, construction disruptions etc, etc, are really unchanged by the location of the facility and soon will be ruled on confirming this.

### **A couple of changed points raised by the addendum do include however:**

- Cycling the plant will be the same in either location and is not a factor to decide where to put the plant. Cycling will affect water levels on Lake Muskoka by 2-3 centimetres and only during low flow periods...i.e. the summer.
- The effect of cycling on the Moon River will be less than what is seen now.
- That construction time could be shorter for Option 1 than 2 is offset by construction methods and access to the Option 1 site the contractor will need due to denied access over Township land. No one will be happy to hear what is potentially planned for on that front. 18 months remains the expected timeframe for either build site.

### **Some further points to consider:**

- The question of not being able to put up a viable plant on Option 1 land is simply not true. Recent turbine designs, even since this project was started, now actually allows for better economies, efficiencies and output at either location.
- In an Option 1 location there is little or no continued benefit to the Township. No negotiated revenue stream. No assistance for an all season tourism bridge. A taller more

intrusive building with a small viewing area and a ruined vantage from Margaret Burgess Park. There would also be a ruined vista of the falls from the south side.

- In an Option 2 location the North Falls remains accessible to enjoyment from both sides. The Township will have ongoing lease and perhaps energy revenue. A long overdue viewing park and a low profile underground facility...and furthermore it is the site the town wanted it moved to. Away from the falls. A bonus thrown in will be protecting the “newly famous” Heritage Tree!
- Just because the previous Muskoka Lakes Council asked for a less intrusive build site than initially proposed, doesn't mean they were wrong to do so. Council did it at the request of the people of Bala, they were successful in their plea to Swift River and Swift River made it happen with added benefits for the town.
- Just because Save the Bala Falls has put on an organized, visible and vocal opposition to anything taking place doesn't mean their information and facts are true and that they represent the views of everyone in Bala. **They don't.**

### **In Conclusion:**

I will conclude by saying that I am disappointed that Swift River Energy has been treated so poorly by some. Their image has been cast as a group of “Bay Street high rollers”, moving in to plunder the town of Bala, grabbing a profit then moving on!

Rather, they happen to be the successful bidder in an open legal tender put out by the Province of Ontario. They have been vetted by the Province and found to be viable, responsible...and yes, of course they are doing it “to make a profit”! A very reasonable expectation in this country.

Whether it is selling gravel or fireworks, providing accounting or real estate services, building a log home or providing financial guidance to a diamond venture are all honourable vocations and I certainly hope all of you make a profit doing it.

Investing, designing and building plants that provide “Green” electrical energy to the Province and showing a return on investment is also an honourable business.

It's time to work with Swift River to achieve benefits for both them and the Township as we would with any other new business coming to our area.

You need to make a change in the direction this project is headed and the long term implications of having the facility built in an Option 1 location:

The industrial view from Margaret Burgess Park alone should make the decision for you.

The permanent loss for an all season tourism bridge...with or without... Swift River's help is a major loss of an opportunity.

A scenic lookout park ...paid for by someone other than the Township...would be a lost tourist attraction which Bala has long asked for.

Please approach Swift River with an offer to negotiate with them in an open, transparent fashion with no delay agenda lurking in the wings. They won't be approaching the Township, so it's up to you to take the first step.

I believe Swift River just might welcome the opportunity to show they can be a good investor and a good Muskoka Lakes business partner for the next 50 years.

Thank you: