

## VOTE TO PROTECT PASSAMAQUODDY BAY

To the editor:

Critical provincial and municipal elections are just around the corner on May 9. Community members around Passamaquoddy Bay need to be aware of an important safety and economic issue that faces us all — and that St. Andrews and Campobello Island residents have the power and opportunity to resolve this problem for all of us. The issue is the remaining LNG project in Passamaquoddy Bay, Downeast LNG.

While intermittent responses over the past 12 years from the Canadian federal and provincial governments have objected to the passage of LNG [tankers] through Head Harbour Passage and into Passamaquoddy Bay, they have not taken decisive action which could have, and still can, immediately stop the LNG projects. Ottawa has refused to enact a regulation or law prohibiting LNG ship transits into the bay. The Province of New Brunswick has actually discouraged Campobello Island and St. Andrews councils from using their local power, voices and votes to enact a local zoning bylaw that could and would stop Downeast LNG dead in its tracks.

Because both communities are organized in a way that they can take power to effect and protect their communities, where other area communities are not so established, both St. Andrews and Campobello Island have the ability to pass a local bylaw prohibiting large foreign or domestic federally-defined hazard zones from encroaching on zoned residential and recreational areas. The new bylaw would immediately mean that Downeast LNG ships would literally be prohibited from transiting into and out of Passamaquoddy Bay, and to do so would be in violation of that law — a place Downeast LNG and their investors do not want to be. It would also mean that the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) would be aiding and abetting that illegal activity. Thus, enacting such a bylaw could stop the LNG permitting at FERC.

In 2014 this local bylaw was proposed to the Campobello Council, but no action was taken. It was also proposed in 2015 to the St. Andrews Council, which rejected it. Save Passamaquoddy Bay 3-Nation Alliance headquarters in Eastport proposed this concept, pointing out the power these two local communities have to act for all of the rest of us.

You can be assured that if I were mayor of St. Andrews right now, the bylaw would already be in place. Ways exist to take this decisive action related to the LNG threat that has dogged our area for way too long. This bylaw can be locked in place now. To enact this solution is to stand against big U.S. corporations, deep U.S. pockets, threats from U.S. developers, real estate devaluation and harm to our vital tourism- and fishing-based economy — not to mention disruption of our safety, security, quality of life and children's future.

Remember that Downeast LNG purchased the 80-acre project site in Mill Cove, Robbinston, for the inflated price of \$2.5 million! This project has dragged on at the U.S. federal level, without completion, thanks to the steadfast work of Save Passamaquoddy Bay 3-Nation Alliance office in Eastport. However, there may very well come a time — and it may come soon — where the LNG project decides its only way to recover its investment in the project will be to offer it for sale — to the highest bidder — from any party, country or organization in the world. Just imagine who and what the new owners could put in our bay, within miles and minutes of our homes, families, livelihoods and futures.

A bylaw can change that real and present threat — a threat that could be even worse than LNG. We can no longer sit on our hands. We must call on our local political leaders to act now, to enact the zoning bylaw, and to lead in the best interests of local communities and all residents around our bay.

St. Andrews Council currently wants to enact a bylaw to protect historic properties. Why not enact a bylaw to protect the lives, property and economy of the town's citizens from LNG ship hazard zones? Those hazard zones would extend from LNG ships over homes, the golf course and the blockhouse in St. Andrews, and over much of Campobello Island, endangering homes, families and livelihoods. Campobello Council, also, can change this immediately.

When voting on May 9 for council candidates, vote for candidates who will enact a bylaw prohibiting LNG hazard zones from endangering your lives and livelihoods. Ask the candidates, push them to recognize this as a logical and attainable solution, and vote accordingly.

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Former mayor  
St. Andrews