

Former Saint Andrews mayor wants LNG in municipal election discussions

Critical 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 Saint 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 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 movements into the bay. The Province of New Brunswick has actually discouraged Campobello Island and Saint 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 pro-

tect their communities, where other area communities are not so established, both Saint 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 US 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 Saint Andrews coun-

Guest column



cil, 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 Saint 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 US 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.

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Bylaw would empower Saint Andrews

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Remember Downeast LNG purchased the 80-acre project site in Mill Cove, Robbinston, Me., 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.

Saint 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, 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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Town of Saint Andrews*