

Alton CLC Minutes Summary – 2019

Meetings held: January 14, April 29, October 28, December 9

January 14

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

It was suggested by a member of the committee, that an easy to understand summary of the geology at Alton may be helpful for the public given the letters of comment that were submitted to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board regarding the extension request for the approval to construct the storage caverns. Alton replied to the public letters of comment, and the [reply includes information on the geology at Alton](#).

Alton is examining two short re-routes for the natural gas pipeline to reduce its overall footprint. One re-route would go around a private landowner, and one would avoid a wetlands area. Additional work is required on the re-routes including surveys and an archaeological review. Alton will continue to work with government regulators and stakeholders regarding this work.

Alton completed a gravity survey of the lease at the end of 2018 and into early 2019. Gravity surveys are a good tool that will help contribute to the project's knowledge of the salt deposit at Alton.

As reminder, [Alton work sites are open only to Alton staff and contractors](#).

A member of the committee suggested getting a model of how the caverns are made, to help explain it to the public. In the [Focus on Alton video](#) on the Alton YouTube channel, there is an animation section that explains how the caverns are made.

An upcoming meeting will include the annual review that is required for the Community Liaison Committee's [Terms of Reference](#).

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

April 29, 2019

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm.

An Alton representative provided project and regulatory updates.

Information has been posted to the Alton website regarding the [Court decision and court order](#). Signage has been posted at the river site per the court order.

When the straw bale hut was removed from the entrance to the Alton river site, items left behind by people leaving the site were catalogued and put into temporary storage for later retrieval.

Property fencing of the Alton river site is continuing, to be followed by fencing at the cavern site.

Next steps are to assess the damage from the flooding at the river site and then remove the 8-9 feet of water in the pumphouse. It will need to be determined what is required for further remediation.

River monitoring work by Dalhousie University scientists has started up again. This is year 11 of the monitoring work.

Project representatives asked for feedback from the CLC members on local community events that the project could participate in through the spring, summer and fall to share information with the public.

A member of the CLC suggested that story boards with graphics are an effective way to share information with the public.

Next meeting of the CLC will need to include review of the [CLC Terms of Reference](#) as part of the agenda. This is an annual review of the Terms of Reference required by the [province's Guideline for community liaison committees](#).

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

October 28, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m.

An Alton representative said the project is engaging in engineering and regulatory planning, with an internal review taking place in advance of the brining process. The goal is to challenge modelling and assumptions, and to improve the project from an environment and engineering perspective. An engineering firm has been retained to lead the review and provide an external perspective.

An Alton representative said Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) continues with the process to develop a regulation to oversee the brining process at Alton. The project must meet all regulatory requirements and regulation.

An Alton representative said the project continues to be involved in two court cases. One is the appeal of the project's Industrial Approval by Sipekne'katik First Nation and the second involves trespassing at the Alton work site.

An Alton representative said there has been recent geotechnical work at the Alton river site.

An Alton representative said the project would like to discuss with the local municipalities the potential to use some of the brine for winter road maintenance.

CLC members provided suggestions for how the project can explain the plan for moving forward. Suggestions included postings in local media, advertising, and meetings as well as more sharing of information on the benefits of natural gas, particularly by people and businesses that are benefiting from the fuel.

An Alton representative said work is underway to advance the natural gas pipeline, and local workers are ready to participate in the process to mark the centre line cut for the natural gas pipeline route that will connect the cavern site to the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline.

An Alton representative said the project is in the process of developing a new website to provide updated information to the community. The current website remains in place, www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca

Per the provincial requirement for an annual review of the Alton CLC Terms of Reference, the [Terms of Reference](#) were reviewed and confirmed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

December 9, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

An Alton representative said that as part of the review that has been taking place to improve the project from an environment and engineering perspective, physical changes to the layout of the river site and lowering the salinity of the brine before it is released into the river are being considered. Any changes will need to be reviewed and approved by regulators. Members of the committee were supportive of changes to the project that would reduce the salinity level of the brine.

Work on the natural gas pipeline routing took place to confirm the best route with the least impact. Field work is to take place in Q1 2020 to mark the centre line for the pipeline route. Shovel tests were recently conducted on areas of high potential along two pipeline re-routes. The shovel tests didn't find anything of significance. The re-routes will re-direct the pipeline to avoid wetlands and private property. The project is waiting to hear back from the province with feedback on compensation for land used for the pipeline, per the condition in the pipeline approval. Permits will be required for watercourses along the pipeline route. The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board also will require a safety review of the pipeline, but that cannot take place until the routing is finalized.

Updates on the review, the pipeline and the shovel tests are being shared with the Mi'kmaq.

Geotechnical drilling took place at the river site in the fall. This work was to help Alton build a better understanding of the soil conditions in the area. All of the work was undertaken on Alton-owned property by a professional geotechnical contractor.

An Alton representative said a representative of the NS Department of Agriculture visited the Alton river site to provide feedback on maintenance of the dike.

In the fall, Alton provided support to: the Mi'kmaq Benevolent Fund; a continuation of the Shubenacadie River study by Ikanawtiket; and, Brookfield Fire and Emergency.

Following on the federal election, members of the committee suggested the project contact Lenore Zann, the new MP for Colchester County, to meet and discuss Alton.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.