

Mr Chairman, panel,

As landowners and residents of La Broquerie, my family and I would like to voice our many concerns to the proposed Manitoba Minnesota Transmission Project.

First as affected landowners we are deeply concerned about having the line on our land.

Significant points include:

My son's residence is within 300 metres of the proposed right of way.

The loss of use of 8 acres of land which includes the destruction of part of a Managed Woodlot that has been conserved per Manitoba Forestry guidelines for over 20 years.

The removal of a shelterbelt providing conservation to a sandy type soil.

The removal of a significant amount of trees and land relating to our tree business.

The plan of our future retirement house is in the proposed right of way.

There are also significant question marks relating to health concerns for these high voltage lines.

I have been reading the transcripts of the hearing and I know the World Health Organization and other government bodies claim these lines are safe but no conclusive evidence proves this point. They all use negative assurance as no conclusive evidence proves they are dangerous. But as it relates to the town of La Broquerie, the location of the line is in close proximity to the two schools, the arena, the golf course, the ball diamonds as well as many residences in the area. As a crown corporation and a government, we would think that we would put the health of our children at the forefront. We understand the claims that the lines are within the guidelines but governments have been known to be wrong. DDT and asbestos were once considered safe, we have regrettably found out many years later that it was not the case. Even though there is no conclusive proof yet, many scientists have questioned the long term safety of these high voltage power lines, especially for children. Are we willing to gamble on these same results?

In addition to all of the unknown health risks, the economic development of the town of La Broquerie will be severely affected by this project. It is complete nonsense to put this line through the town.

The town and RM of La Broquerie are some of the higher growth areas in the Province of Manitoba. This proposal would not only have potentially devastating health consequences but would also altar the economic development of this community and area forever.

In Hydro's own words from their routing presentation at the hearings:

Routing considerations

- Final Preferred Route generally located away from residences, parks, recreation areas communities

That is from one of their slides.

I guess the people of La Broquerie do not count.

We would also like to commend Hydro for their very Hollywood production of their simulation video where no one gets hurt and with a happy ending. Funny, (sad really), how they conveniently forgot the houses, the barns, our tree farm and many other important items.

Another item that is insulting and arrogant is the offers of compensation prior to obtaining the necessary licenses. This to me demonstrates Hydro's lack of respect for the process and is just a form of bullying. The compensation offers are laughable considering they are one time payments for objects that will be there in Hydro's own submissions as indefinite.

Another interesting piece to the Hydro tactics is the buyout of our council in La Broquerie. The council was very vocal in opposing this line until they had a meeting with Hydro and were told to remain neutral during these proceedings in return for a promise of funds if the line goes through. The buyout reported to be over a million dollars, now is this not bribery? The deception and backroom deals going on are quite the opposite to the so called transparency Hydro preached during their opening statements of this hearing. With all this going on we are suppose to trust all their claims. I personally have zero trust in anything they say or publish.

Finally the much talked about engagement process. I have to say it is a farce, the process was for all intent only started after the proposed route was already selected. This to me is no form of engagement at all. When the "community session" was held in La Broquerie, it was just for show. Hydro just force fed their information and most people left bitter, angry and disgusted. But Hydro's goal was attained as most people felt there was no more reason to object as the decision had already been made. I heard on more than one occasion Hydro gets what Hydro wants.

It seems to me that Hydro is in a streak of making very poor decisions (Keeyask, Bipole III, etc) and they are just trying to cover up their mistakes with more mistakes. This ship has lost its rudder. And the people of Manitoba will suffer the consequences if we allow this to go on.

For all of these reasons the commission should recommend to deny the license.

Respectfully yours,
Darren Bouchard