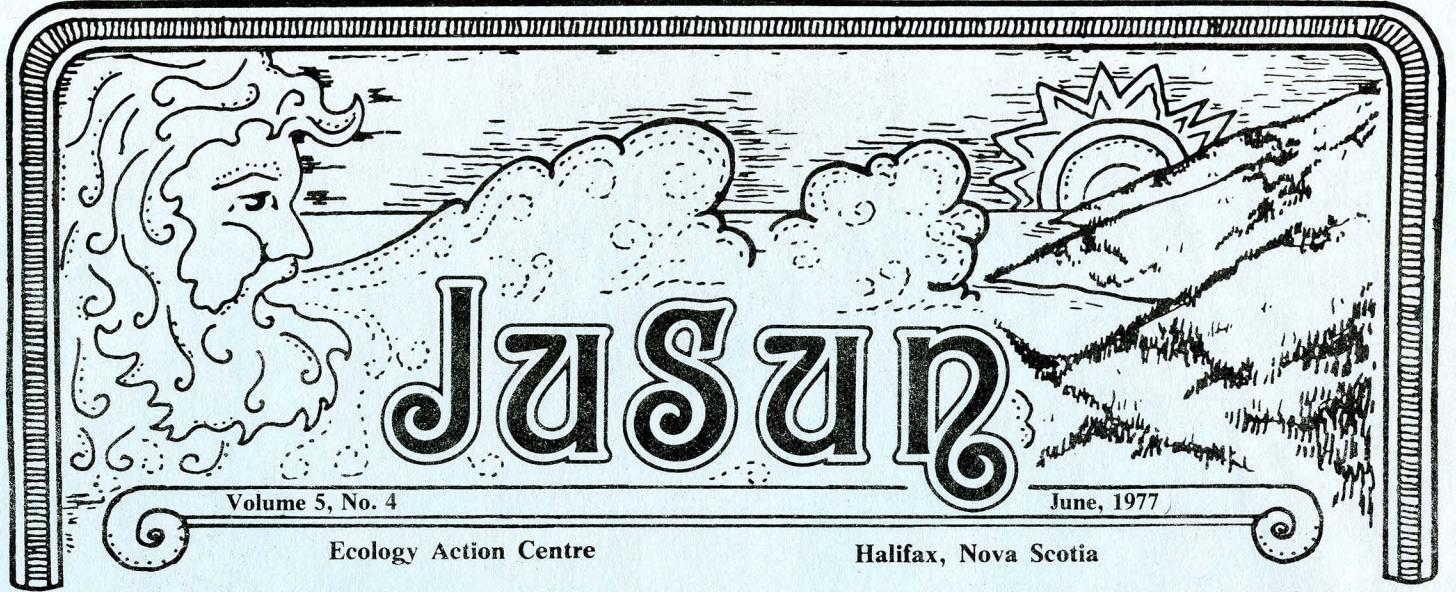


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Ecology Action Centre

Halifax, Nova Scotia

### BARRINGTON STREET BATTLE MEETS WITH SUCCESS

by Susan Mayo

The present Barrington Street alignment from Cogswell Street Interchange to the MacDonald Bridge was approved by Halifax City Council on May 26, 1977 as the appropriate future alignment of Barrington Street North. This unanimous decision represented the realization of a long standing objective of the Transportation and Urban Development Committee of Ecology Action Centre.

Our concern began back in late 1976 when the concept for realignment was put forward by Halifax City staff. The subsequent \$80,000 consultant's report by J. Philip Vaughan and Associates recommended an extensive and costly widening to the east side of Barrington Street with the construction of an interchange and ramp access to the MacDonald Bridge. Support of the Vaughan Report's conclusions were endorsed by City staff.

Concurrently, the Department of National Defense were in the process of having a Development Plan drawn up for the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax. This Base Development Plan is reported to propose a 2,000 car parking lot on the present Canadian National Railway Deepwater Yards on the land east of Barrington Street and adjacent to DND.

On July 21, 1976 the Transportation and Urban Development Committee of the Ecology Action Centre presented a detailed brief on the matter to the Mayor and Council of the city of Halifax. A summary report was printed in Jusur (see Volume 4, No 7) and distributed to E.A.C. members and other concerned groups and individuals. The main thrust of our proposal was that street lines should be kept where they were and that the development and redevelopment of the lands east and west of Barrington Street must be carried out in close consultation with area residents and groups such as the old North End Community. In addition the Centre with volunteer assistance from expert planners

advanced a "Housing and Light Industry Alternative" which considered social, economic, traffic and environmental parameters as well as engineering factors related to the exiting Barrington Street area. Our proposal and concerns were again highlighted at a public meeting on September 20, 1976.

Following from these events enquiries and communications were made to various departments and levels of government.

On May 19, 1977 Alan Ruffman, chairman of the Centre's Transportation and Urban Development Committee, appeared before the Canadian Transport Commission in Halifax to request a public inquiry of the possible federal land exchange between DND and CNR of the CNR Deepwater Yards. Concern was expressed over the elimination of this rail transit potential into the city as a future option in the public transportation.

The question of realignment of Barrington Street North once again went before the Mayor and Aldermen of Halifax on May 19, 1977. Phil Pacey addressed Committee-of-the-Whole on the Centre's behalf and emphasized that Barrington Street North be retained in its present alignment for the establishment of the eastern boundary of the Uniacke Development area and that Council proceed as soon as possible to call for proposals to renovate and redevelop these lands in close consultation with residents and groups in the area.

At this same meeting the Old North End Community representative, John Chamard, argued for the protection, safety and security of the existing residents of Barrington Street and their neighbours to the west.

The item was brought forward to City Council Meeting on May 26 and the following motion was unanimously passed: "Moved by Alderman Sullivan, seconded by Alderman Shannon that, as recommended by the City Planning Committee, City Council approve the present alignment of Barrington Street

North from the Cogswell Street Interchange to Devonshire Avenue as the appropriate future alignment of Barrington Street North and that staff be asked to fine-tune a design including a sidewalk or sidewalks."

Ecology Action Centre looks forward to the future re / development of this area and hopes that such development will be both in scale and in harmony with the existing business and residential neighbourhood.



E.A.C.'s FIRST BAKESALE on June 2nd was a tremendous success thanks to the generosity of our members. The people in the Halifax-Dartmouth area, whom we were able to get in touch with, spent a great deal of time and effort making really fine cakes, cookies, muffins, loaves and the like. This warm support was most encouraging to the volunteers and staff who organized and carried out the sale.

We were able to raise \$133.00 but the enthusiastic support of the members was worth even more. One of the things we learned from our bakesale was that if we could contact a larger number of members well in advance through an organized volunteer phone tree, we could probably make it even more successful.

A hearty thank you to all who helped!!

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS PAPER



## BAN ON NON-REFILLABLES SUPPORTED BY E.A.C.

by Brian Gifford

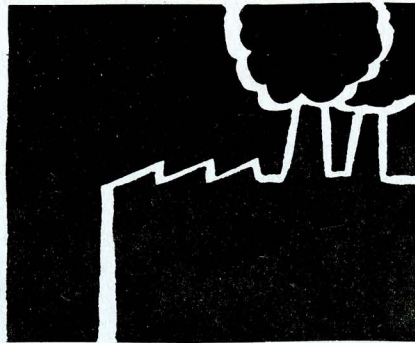
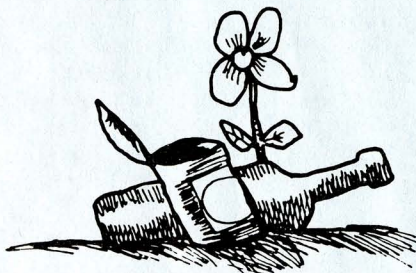
On June 7, 1977, E.A.C. issued the following news release in support of Environment Minister Vincent MacLean's announcement of the province's decision to draw up regulations leading to a ban of non-refillable bottles.

Ecology Action Centre has praised and strongly supported Environment Minister Vince MacLean's policy to ban non-refillable beverage containers. The policy was announced in a statement last Saturday. A ban combined with a guaranteed full cash refund for refillables is the most effective way to deal with the growing trend to throw-away containers. The Centre has advocated a ban and a guaranteed refund for years and is very encouraged to learn that they are now government policy. The Centre is anxious to see the Beverage Container Act and its regulations proclaimed, giving the policy legal status.

The ban on throw-away containers will have a substantial effect on the environmental and economic impact of the soft drink industry. But the impact on public awareness will be just as important. Packaged beverages are widespread consumer goods. They've become a symbol of the senseless pattern of increasing waste that characterizes our modern age. Reversing the trend in this one area may well lead to a greater care by Nova Scotians in the way they use resources in all aspects of their lives.

The direct effect of this policy will be that the soft drink industry will save about 50% of its energy costs and produce only 1/4 the garbage it now does. Consumer prices will drop about 10% and litter should be reduced by at least 20%. The policy should also create a net increase of around 50 jobs throughout the province, according to studies of bottle laws elsewhere.

The Centre looks forward to more policies of this kind from the Nova Scotia government, encouraging a conserving approach to resources. A simple but important additional step would be to adopt a policy to accept beer bottles at Nova Scotia Liquor Commission stores. This would increase the return rate for beer bottles significantly. Steps like these must be taken as resource scarcities grow, to help transform Nova Scotia from a high consumption society to a 'conserver' society.



## ECOLOGY ACTION CENTRE REACTS TO NEW PROVINCIAL COAL POLICY

by Susan Holtz

Subsequent to Premier Regan's announcement, on June 1, 1977, of the provincial government's intention to proceed with strip mining for coal in Pictou County, E.A.C. issued, on June 2nd, the press release below.

Ecology Action Centre today commented upon the Premier's announcement for a new coal policy which involves large scale open-pit mining. Ms. Holtz, Energy Co-ordinator for the Centre, stated: "Open-pit mining can be an environmental disaster but with sufficient care and effort, the impact can be minimized both during and after the mining operation. Generally speaking, it appears that appropriate measures will be taken in Nova Scotia to ensure that this new development will be environmentally acceptable."

The Centre has researched strip-mining legislation in other Canadian provinces and in the U.S.A.

The only major area which, in the Centre's opinion, needs attention is that of informed citizen input. In the Premier's statement of June 1, he indicated that the prefeasibility study will include determining the eventual end land-use for the area which is to be mined: The Centre feels that it is important for the ordinary citizens, not just local government authorities, to have full access to plans as they are being developed, and to have some input in the final decision. Perhaps public workshops and an informal public hearing could be held on the optimum usage of the land after it has been mined.

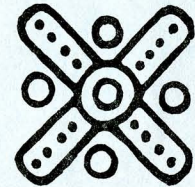
In addition, ongoing citizen communication and participation should be part of the project.

It appears that strong efforts have been made to ensure that the best contemporary mining practice will be used. For example, an ample amount of funds have been set aside for eventual reclamation of the land. American experts have quoted the sum of 35 cents per ton of coal as a typical figure for reclamation costs. The Nova Scotia government appears to be willing to demand up to \$4.00 a ton if necessary.

All of the coal from the new open-pit mine in Stellarton is to be used for the Nova Scotia Power Corporation Trenton electrical plant.

Other oil-fired generating plants will be converted to coal in an attempt to reduce fuel costs for electrical generation.

However, fuel costs are not the only factor in rising electricity rates. Another major component is the increasing cost of capital expansion. This in turn is related to an ever increasing use of electricity. Capital expansion can be slowed through a determined conservation effort using a mixture of pricing, technology, and other methods. In addition, renewable sources of energy together with energy conservation should be given equal priority with electricity supply in provincial energy policy.



## NOW IT'S WINDMILL PHONES

When residents of Pictou Island pick up their phones to call a friend they aren't just shooting the breeze — they're actually using it.

Telephones on Pictou Island were converted to dial service recently and along with this came a new innovation for MT&T — wind-powered phones.

The island, about five miles in the ocean between Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, has no commercial electrical service, so MT&T engineers had to look at alternative means of power generation.

Environmental data suggested that the island would be an ideal place to harness the wind. And that's exactly what the Company did. It decided to erect a windmill which would provide enough power to operate the phones and charge batteries which will operate phones on windless days.

### Upside down eggbeater

The chosen windmill was not available when the Company was ready to provide dial service so a temporary unit was installed. It does not fully meet the power requirements and is augmented by a gas turbine generator.

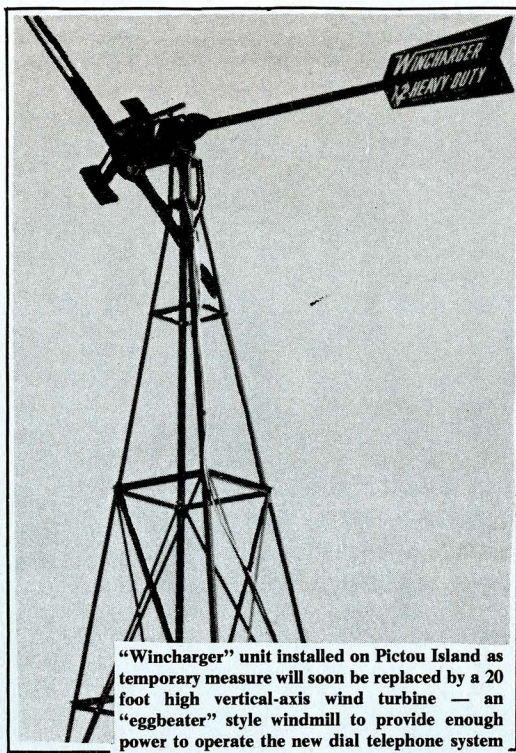
This unit will be replaced in December by a "vertical axis" wind turbine unit which looks something like an upside down eggbeater. It will have the capacity to provide the necessary amounts of power to operate the 20 telephones on the island.

According to Don Bower, MT&T Special Services, this Canadian-developed wind turbine is the most economical answer for Pictou Island operations.

Its efficiency also shows up in other ways.

To generate electricity the "egg-beater" turbine does not have to run every which way. Its symmetrical shape offers the same surface to the wind from any direction. Power is taken off at the base of the shaft, eliminating the need for cumbersome components atop the tower.





"Wincharger" unit installed on Pictou Island as temporary measure will soon be replaced by a 20 foot high vertical-axis wind turbine — an "eggbeater" style windmill to provide enough power to operate the new dial telephone system on the Island.

#### Plane lands on single road

The dial telephone is about the only modern convenience Pictou Islanders have. Home lighting is by oil lamp; water comes through wells and hand pumps; heat is provided by the kitchen stove in many homes.

The farming and fishing community is located along one shore of the five mile long island which has only one single-lane road. Visitors get there by plane which lands on the single-lane road. However, it is not unusual for the plane to first come down and buzz a few cattle to clear the road for a landing.

For MT&T engineers it doesn't matter if the wind blows hot or cold so long as it blows. And should there be a few days when it doesn't blow, there is battery capacity for at least five windless days which is rare on Pictou Island.

Somehow the new phones don't seem to fit in yet with the lifestyle on Pictou Island, although the residents like the idea — save a few who claim the old system was "just as good."

In spite of this, Islanders count themselves as unique in Canada with their "wind powered" phones.

*Reprinted with permission from The Bulletin, the newspaper for Maritime Tel & Tel and the Island Telephone Company; from the November 1976 issue.*

"Turn off the lights; in the silence of your darkened home you can hear a thousand rivers whispering their thanks."

## MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The following is a precis of a brief presented to the Municipal Development Plan Committee of the City of Halifax, by the Urban Development and Transportation Committee of E.A.C. on January 28, 1977.

The brief dealt with five reports prepared by the Halifax planning department:

1. The **Land Development Distribution Strategy** suggested that new development be directed away from Mainland South towards Mainland North and the Peninsula. This seems reasonable, but the projected population for 1991 should be reduced from 184,000 to a level in line with current trends. (Halifax's percentage of the Country's population has dropped about 4% since 1971.) Even if Halifax maintains its percentage of the population, its share would still only be about 143,500, given current trends. Planning for a larger population may lead to overbuilding of roads, sewers, etc., with the tax burden shared by a smaller population than planned.

The amended strategy should be examined to determine whether it will provide a reasonable proportion of housing for persons on low incomes within a reasonable commuting distance of their jobs.

The brief includes tables detailing household income (1971 Census) and dwelling values and rent (1971).

2. The calculation of the impact on transportation of the population distribution alternatives in the **Technical Report Transportation, Land Development Distribution Strategy**, is a useful exercise. Staff's estimate of costs may, however, be inaccurate. Moreover, the amount of street widening called for by City Staff is undesirable and conflicts with Council's policies favouring transit. Neighbourhoods would be disrupted by wholesale demolition of housing, especially along Barrington Street, Chebucto Road, Robie Street and Young Street. The Centre, therefore, feels that the traffic patterns presented in the Technical Report are unrealistic. The Centre recommends examination of alternatives involving more transit use, a smaller total population, and provision of employment opportunities closer to the newly developing residential area.

With regard to land costs, a proposal made by the Centre in our brief, "The Housing and Light Industry Alternative" (July 21, 1976), would save land having an estimated value of \$7.1 million.

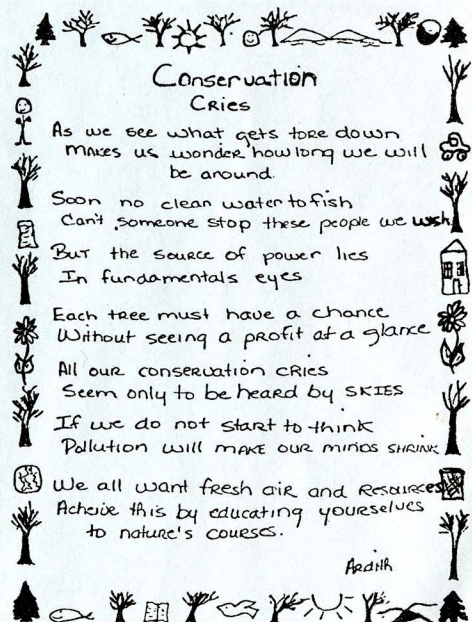
3. The Centre recommends that a form of temporary downzoning be implemented for each of the areas designated for **Detailed Planning** until a new zoning map is prepared. This may help to avert some of the haphazard or hurried development that has occurred elsewhere (e.g. Halifax County) just before new plans are implemented. Such downzoning need not be indefinite, and might give planners, neighbourhoods and property owners an incentive to complete the plans quickly.

The Centre also recommends specific changes in the boundaries of areas for detailed planning.

4. **Objectives and Policies for the Halifax Central Business District** have been discussed in one form or another for five years. Some amendments should still be made, then the policies should be adopted. The Centre recommends strengthening some objectives. Objective No. 4, for instance, calls for the conservation or rehabilitation of heritage aspects of the CBD, but does not reflect the dominant role this area should play in the city as a heritage area. A dozen suggestions for changes in the wording of various policy statements are listed in the brief.

There should be interim controls to ensure that the intention of the objectives and policies is not unduly compromised before adoption of the Municipal Development Plan. 5. Early action is needed on the **Objectives and Policies for the Halifax Waterfront Development Area** if the City is to retain some control in this area. The wording of the present document should be strengthened, clarified and modified. A number of detailed recommendations are made in the brief, dealing largely with more precise definitions and limitations, and pointing out ambiguities in a number of the objectives and policy statements.

In conclusion, the Centre believes the overall intent of the objectives is reasonable but is concerned about the vagueness and lack of clarity of some objectives. Many of the policies are excellent, particularly those related to scale and design detail. These intentions might, however, be furthered by some modification, and by the inclusion of some additional policies, especially in the areas of conservation, movement, civic design, housing, public utilities and infrastructure. There should also be firm interim controls to ensure that development taking place before formal approval of the plan by the Province of Nova Scotia, meets the spirit of the policies and objectives.







**ADVERTISING IN JUSUN**

For the past year, the Federal Department of Secretary of State has provided E.A.C. with a grant for the publication and distribution of our newsletter. This source of funding is now near its end. Needless to say, we feel there is an ongoing need to keep in touch with our membership and the public at large.

In order to maintain and improve this channel of communication we are now open to accepting small advertisements for publication in JUSUN. Such advertisements should be in keeping with the Centre's stated objectives in promoting environmental awareness.

Please contact Susan Mayo at 422-4311, if you are interested.

*Advertisements must be submitted by the first Friday of the month.*

JUSUN is the MicMac word for "wind". It also contains our English word "sun". As wind is the active agent of solar energy it is hoped that the JUSUN will serve as a medium for voicing environmental concerns throughout the Maritimes.

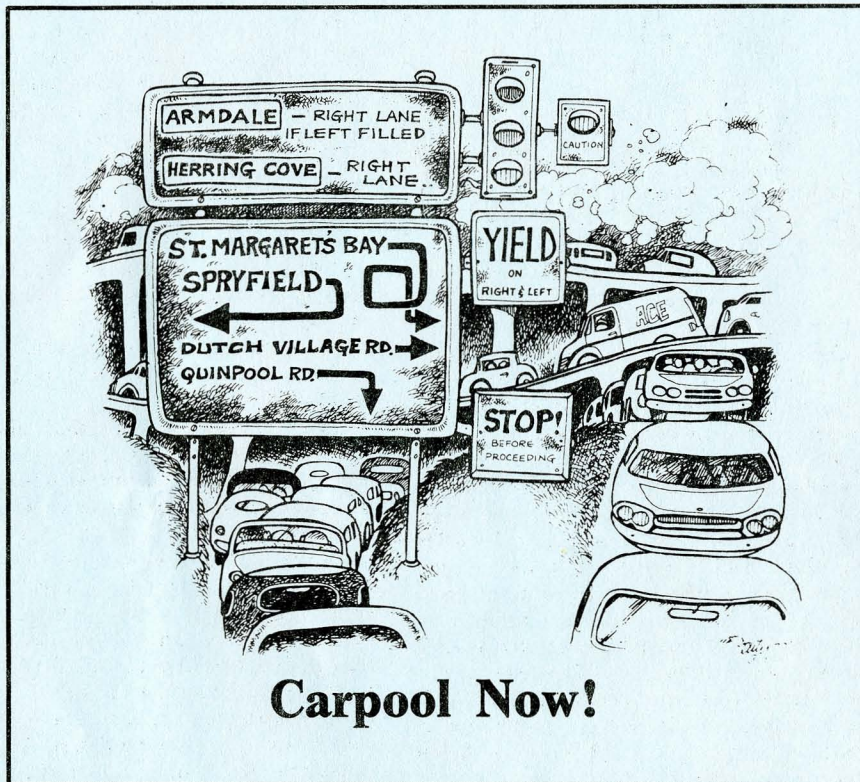
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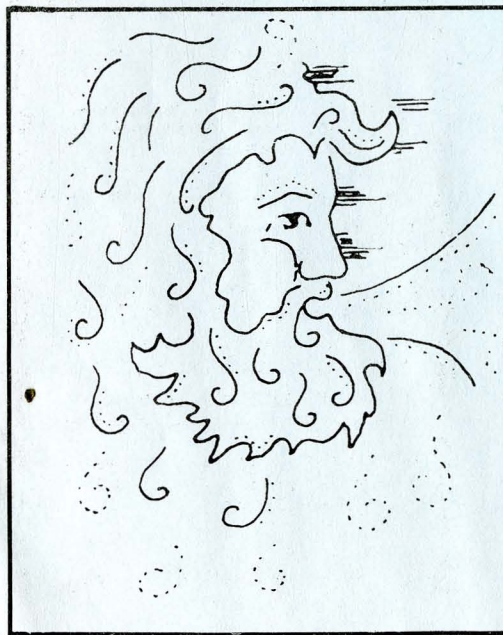
**CAN YOU HELP US OUT?**

The Centre's office needs one or two filing cabinets for our library on Urban Development and Transportation, Pollution, Parks, Spruce Budworm, and various other topics that comprise an Environment/Ecology Library. We also need a wall clock to keep us up to date on such things as the time of day.

We would most appreciate if anyone could contribute these items. In exchange, we will provide a year's membership with Ecology Action Centre. Please contact the Centre for more details if necessary [422-4311].



**Carpool Now!**



**Membership Form**

I wish to join Ecology Action Centre and receive free copies of JUSUN, the E.A.C. newsletter.

- \$5.00 Subscribing membership
- \$25.00 Contributing membership
- \$50.00 Supporting membership
- \$100.00 Corporate membership
- Donations

All payments are tax-deductible. Mail your payment to Ecology Action Centre, Forrest Building, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.



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