

# ***Pompey Wind Energy Ordinance Committee***

## ***Meeting Minutes***

*August 6, 2009*

### **I. Call to order**

**Town Councilor Craig Smithgall** called to order the regular meeting of the **Town of Pompey Wind Energy Committee** on August 6, 2009 at the Town Hall, Town of Pompey. No meeting was held on July 23, 2009, as originally scheduled, due to unavailability of committee members. That meeting was rescheduled to this date.

### **II. Roll call**

The following persons were present: Craig Smithgall, Lloyd Sutton, Gerry Devine, Dan McClung, Lynn Greenkey, Victoria Lightcap and Renee Rotondo.

### **III. Topics of Discussion**

The Committee spent the entire time reviewing the current draft and its language in an effort to finalize the ordinance.

The Committee would like to have some provision that would give the Planning Board sufficient discretion to avoid the need for variances.

There was also discussion about establishing criteria for engineers to apply in certifying WECS, for instance, height, rigidity, base adequate to support tower, turbine ability to withstand wind speed. From an engineering standpoint, standards are nebulous. Could we set wind standards; have certain maximum wind speed that they design to? It was proposed to have reference standards for horizontal v. vertical WECS. Lloyd Sutton favored this. It was suggested to use the ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers) standard 7.

Craig voiced concern that we not impose too much on the applicant. Gerry Devine noted that, while Skystream is very good, he is not sure about newer, lesser known systems. Renee questioned how to handle homegrown, hybrid, experimental WECS. Dan pointed out that we will require engineering analysis on all of them. Tim want to allow short, free-standing systems that meet our standards and won't "hurt anyone". He has a hops farm and wants to put short, vertical WECS on fence posts around the perimeter. Question: why are we allowing this but banning guy wires?

Dan questioned why we have different height requirements for vertical and horizontal free-standing WECS. Craig said that the goal is to keep them out of hands reach for the average person. Dan proposed changing the rotor definition to cover both horizontal and vertical WECS.

Renee mentioned that NYSERDA recommends adding a special use permit to the approval process. They consider this best practices. The special use permit could address all these concerns. SEQRA will address the visual affect.

There is a danger in going with something that is non-quantifiable, like aesthetics. There needs to be objective criteria so that this is not left to subjectivity of individuals. Board members will change; attitudes can change. Need to have standards to follow.

Victoria wanted to know how commercial wind farms are not permitted now. Lloyd advised that the current zoning law covers this. It does not allow multiple, principle uses. Should this be somehow referenced in the ordinance? There is a kW limit. None of the hamlets would be eligible.

Ridge lines are going to be the issue; this is where the wind is. The Committee needs to think about this. In farming zones, wind energy use not now permitted. This does not fit into accessory structure definition. Need a variance now, which is why moratorium and local law on wind energy desired.

This ordinance will not permit someone from selling extra energy back to the grid.

Victoria brought up the idea of community windmills to reduce dependency on the grid. This could provide energy to fire departments, town, school buildings and reduce tax bills. NYSERDA has grants in significant amounts for schools to put up windmills.

Craig requests that all comments on this draft be submitted as soon as possible.

#### **IV. Adjournment**

**Town Councilor Craig Smithgall** adjourned the meeting with our next meeting scheduled for August 20, 2009.

Minutes submitted by: Renee M. Rotondo