

Town of Enfield
Public Hearing Minutes
Enfield Elementary School
Tuesday, April 12, 2016
7:00 p.m.

Present: Town Supervisor Ann Rider, Town Councilperson Virginia Bryant, Town Councilperson Mike Carpenter, Town Councilperson Henry Hansteen, Town Councilperson Michael Miles, Town Clerk Alice Linton.

Town Supervisor Ann Rider opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

Supervisor Rider stated the purpose of the public hearing was for the Enfield Town Board to hear the public's opinion on the completeness of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) regarding some modifications that the Black Oak Wind Farm is wanting to make to their project layout. Specifically, to potentially relocate 2 of the approved wind turbines to 1 of 3 proposed locations, as well as relocate a substation, add a new permanent wind measurement tower just south of Turbine 4, and relocate approximately 8,400 linear feet of buried collection line, but, except as noted, the project would otherwise remain as consisting of seven wind turbines generating 16.1 megawatts (MW) of electricity utilizing the GE 2.3-107 model wind turbines.

Black Oak Wind Farm's environmental people Haley Aldrich, with additions made by the town's environmental engineers, LaBella Associates, have presented the Enfield Town Board with a SDEIS regarding these proposed changes and the town board accepted this document as substantially complete and ready for public comment on March 9, 2016. The document is available on line at www.blackoakwindfarmny.com and a hard copy is at the Enfield Town Hall and the Tompkins County Public Library. The Enfield Town Board was then required to open a written comment period and have a public hearing for the purpose of hearing from interested people and agencies as to the completeness of the DSEIS. This period commenced on March 12, 2016 and has been extended to April 22, 2016.

Supervisor Rider introduced members of the Enfield Town Board and then lead the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor Rider then opened the floor to public comments.

John Rancich of Enfield stated he is the originator of the project. He feels a more than complete job has been done on the DSEIS and the project will be good for the community and the Town of Enfield. It will generate years of clean power. He urged the board to accept the DSEIS and get the project underway.

Dawn Drake of Enfield stated she feels the project is unsafe and is concerned about health side effects to residents. Investors have been given a choice, but residents have not. There is already a level of stress even before the project is up. Can there be a guarantee of no side effects? The town board represents residents and needs to listen to what they have to say.

Jude Lemke of Enfield stated she is a member of the Enfield Wind Farm Advisory Committee and has studied impacts of wind farms in general and the impacts of this project in detail. She has submitted her written comments to the town board. It appears many questions have not yet been answered regarding the DSEIS. She is concerned about the town's haste and urged the town board to go back and address LaBella's comments.

Gretchen Herman of Ithaca stated she supports the Black Oak Wind Farm and feels numerous benefits will be provided such as \$45,000 for a community building. The wind farm would create jobs, provide internet access, meet or exceed environmental regulations. She urged the town board to support this community wind farm.

Dave Ritchie of Ithaca stated he is a lease owner of a solar panel in the town on Mecklenburg Road. He is an investor in the Black Oak Wind Farm. He feels the project is community supported and landowners have benefited for 6 years already. He urged the town board to support the wind farm.

Rob Tesori of Enfield stated he feels the turbines are too close to residences and some of his neighbors are very distraught. He doesn't believe the DSEIS addresses leaseholders properly. Once the 7 sites have been determined for turbines, he questioned what will happen to the other 3 sites that aren't chosen. Will contracts be dropped once the final 7 sites are chosen.

Brad Connors of Enfield has worked on many energy efficient projects through his job. He asked why this project doesn't have the support of local experts. Cornell University had actively pursued wind turbines on Mt. Pleasant, but they pulled back and abandoned the project. There is no quantity of research on new state of the art equipment. He asked everyone to take a look at what will happen if this project goes through. Can we live with allowing it to happen.

Sara Hess of Ithaca stated she is not an investor, but has been attending town meetings and reading dozens of articles. She studied maps and has driven down roads in the area where turbines are proposed. As she listened and learned she felt the intensity of conflict, and wishes solar power would be enough, but feels wind power is needed.

Les Blomberg of Vermont is an expert on noise issues. He highlighted problems in the SDEIS that cannot be fixed. Supporting data was not provided for conclusions. If data is not capable of withstanding scrutiny, it should be removed from the DSEIS. He provided a checklist of the things that the DSEIS should have covered with respect to noise. The whole point of the process is to identify environmental impacts early in the process so mitigation can be addressed.

Eric Gasteiger of Enfield asked if oil and gas leases on properties had been considered and if the FAA had been questioned regarding flight patterns. He stated there has been no discussion on agriculture impacts and the loss of water from soil downwind from turbines. If more bats are killed there will be more harmful insects. If a substation is located on wetlands, underground cables can cause stray voltage. He asked who will fight fires close to turbines.

Deborah Cipolla-Dennis of Dryden stated her parents live close to wind turbines and are not bothered by them. She understood that the proposed turbines on Mt. Pleasant would have had problems with FAA restrictions. Cornell University engaged in a 2 year study of birds and bats and found wind turbines have minimal impact.

Marcus Gingerich of Enfield feels not a lot of detail was given in the DSEIS on what needs to be done. He understands investors will lose money and Black Oak Wind Farm started as a community project. He now believes the wind farm will be sold as soon as permits are issued. He understands that this was a highly speculative investment. He also questioned the legality of construction of an access road and an excavation hole.

Nancy Spero of Enfield stated the wind farm won't have a big impact on her, but if towers were close to her house she would sell her home. Some will be fine living close to a turbine, but others will have a harder time. She hopes those who need to move will have help and support.

Marguerite Wells of Enfield stated in order to make the DSEIS public, they needed to get the document done. LaBella did respond saying the document was complete for the process to begin. Cornell University is only a customer that will be purchasing electricity. She would like to see the project remain community owned. Local investors will still be part of the project even if larger investors join.

Maria Ortiz of Enfield stated she is heartbroken for people in the Black Oak area. She feels town board members are not with them, but against them even though their job is to protect and make the community safe.

Mimi Mehaffey of Enfield thanked the Enfield Wind Farm Advisory Committee for their work. She would like to know who to call when there are problems - when residents can't sleep or are worried about ice throws. She wonders if someone would trade homes for a year with those who can't stay in their own homes.

Andrew Auble of Enfield feels the wind turbines are not fossil free and they are not efficient. If there isn't a sustained wind of 30 mph, fossil fuels will need to pick up the difference. The fluctuations require continuous power from outside sources. It takes more fuel to produce a turbine than the turbine will ever produce.

Gary Fisher of Enfield feels public relations efforts are short-sighted. Wind farms are sold all the time. Investors die and investments are inherited and sold. He doesn't feel this is a community supported project.

Joanne Cipolla of Dryden stated when her property was going to be impacted by fracking she wanted to stop it in her area. She doesn't want to breath emissions from burning gas. Wind turbines aren't incredibly loud and ice falls to the ground below turbines. The charge today is to determine if the impact statement will be approved. The wind farm will be built and has been approved.

Beverly Gingerich of Enfield thanked the town board for their due diligence. She asked if Ann Rider and Virginia Bryant read the original Environmental Impact Statement before they approved it in 2013. If the town board in 2008-2009 had done due diligence we would not be here today. She asked why the town board had decreased setbacks. There didn't appear to be much discussion about the issue. Some will be able to live with the infrasound, but others will have problems.

Supervisor Rider closed the public hearing at 8:12 p.m. She thanked everyone for their participation and stated a transcription of the public hearing will be available to the public.

Supervisor Rider moved, with a second by Councilperson Miles to adjourn at 8:14 p.m. Carried

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Linton, Enfield Town Clerk