

Renewable Energy Advisory Committee

August 10, 2017 Meeting

In Attendance: Mike Carpenter, Marcus Gingerich, Art Godin, Mimi Mehaffey, Dan Walker, Jude Lemke (arrived late due to travel) Not Present: Walt Smithers (out of town)

Mike proposed that the agenda for this meeting consist of determining what we are trying to do as a committee and how we will proceed.

A central question is how we are going to find the most relevant and true information available. We will all need to do a lot of careful research. Mimi distributed printed copies of a report from the Town of Bethany's Wind Turbine Study Committee, as well as bullet points identifying areas of concern related to wind. Art expressed a need to know in advance what the next meeting's discussion would focus on so that he can better apply his efforts to come up to speed with others who have been studying these issues for a long time.

Another question is "Why do we need a new wind law?" Members of the committee contend that the present law is flawed. Some of the language is unclear, some important issues are not included and some of the information is outdated.

If we are to write a better law, how will we proceed? Will we try to fix the current law or start from scratch? After some discussion we reached consensus that our best approach would be to draw from the best existing Town ordinances we can find to create a new law.

First we need to agree on an overall structure—a backbone. One issue is whether one ordinance should serve to regulate wind projects of all sizes, or whether we should propose different ordinances for big, medium and small projects. Once a structure is in place we can draw from other ordinances and our own research to flesh in each section.

Dan thinks the first five sections of the existing wind law are OK. For our next meeting Dan agreed to outline a flow chart of the steps currently required to apply for a permit. Also for our next meeting the wind project sub-group (Mimi, Marcus & Jude) will present its recommendation of a structure, choosing from among the best ordinances that have been identified to date, which include those adopted by the NY Townships of Somerset, Clayton and Hammond.

Reflecting on how difficult it would likely be for a Town Board to properly monitor a big renewable energy project while carrying on its normal business, we touched on the idea of the Town's appointing a committee to monitor and enforce such projects, under its oversight, as other townships have done.

Our next meetings will be held at the Community Building on Wed 8/23 and Wed 9/14/17, both at 7-9 PM.

-Minutes submitted by Art Godin.