

► Allegany

# Town board rethinking wind-turbine farms in light of ban in Yorkshire

By Rick Miller  
Olean Times Herald

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ALLEGANY — Supervisor Patrick Eaton said a recent ban on wind-turbine farms by the Yorkshire Town Board has caused the Allegany Town Board to rethink its position regarding proposed wind turbines in the Chipmunk area.

Another issue expected to have an impact on the proposed 32-turbine Everpower wind farm in the Chipmunk area in the southwest portion of the town of Allegany is the town's portion of P.I.L.O.T.

(payment in lieu of taxes) payments negotiated by the Cattaraugus County Industrial Development Agency (IDA).

The proposal is not dead, yet, Mr. Eaton emphasized.

The town councilmen will meet in special session Monday at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall with Daniel Spitzer, the attorney they hired to advise the town on wind-power

issues.

One of the issues the supervisor wants to address is a proposal to extend the distance from which a wind turbine's noise is measured, or to remove it, which would in effect draw around each windmill based on a certain noise (decibel) level. That line could not extend past a residence.

The town board had recommended to the Allegany Town Zoning Board a 2,500-foot buffer between wind turbines and residences, but Concerned Citizens of

Cattaraugus County advised Chipmunk residents there could likely be higher noise levels at greater distances

"We're re-examining our views on windmills," the supervisor said Thursday. "We don't feel comfortable with the IDA involvement."

In particular, he said the town would only be getting about \$22,000 in P.I.L.O.T. payments a year. That's for all 32 wind turbines, not each one, he added. Mr. Eaton said he did not believe there would be additional "host community fees" available

outside of the P.I.L.O.T. agreement, which is negotiated by the IDA. "We're not doing it for \$22,000," he stated.

The school district, county and town would receive P.I.L.O.T. payments in the same proportion of the respective taxes in the town. One example shows a school district getting 50 percent of the P.I.L.O.T., the county 40 percent and the town the remaining 10 percent.

Besides concerns from Chipmunk area residents over noise from the wind turbines, some board members want a

moratorium to sort out other issues. Some are looking for a way to stop the process. Mr. Spitzer's advice to the town is likely to be in closed-door executive session, but the other part of the meeting will be open to the public.

"My job is to get the best deal for town taxpayers and protect town residents," Mr. Eaton said. "I don't think you will see 32 windmills. It's not dead yet, but problems will have to be addressed. The town of Yorkshire really

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perked up our interest."

Yorkshire Supervisor Marcia Spencer said the town board voted 4-1 last month not to proceed with the town's wind turbine law.

"After months of listening to the people, we voted not to proceed with the wind turbine law," she said. "It did not agree with our compre-

hensive plan."

Without a local law allowing the wind turbine farm like Horizon Power was proposing, the town's zoning law prohibited the project.

"I just personally felt I had to vote not to proceed with the law, especially with the 420-foot tall blades," Ms. Spencer said.

She added that she

thought it would be difficult to site the turbines without affecting homeowners with their sound.

"I just think your home is your biggest investment," she explained, adding that wind turbines do not belong near residential settings.

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