



Town of Eddington

906 Main Road Eddington, Maine 04428

PLANNING BOARD

February 10, 2011

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Tom Vanchieri.

ROLL CALL: Members present were Tom Vanchieri, Frank Higgins, Henry Hodges, Gretchen Heldmann, Jeff Thurlow and Russell Smith, Town Manager. Susan Dunham-Shane and Charles Norburg had excused absences. Motion to accept Frank as a voting member of the Board for tonight's meeting by Henry Hodges, Gretchen Heldmann 2nd. All in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING

Tom opened this second Public Hearing for the Large and Small Scale Wind Energy Facility Ordinance at 6:30 pm outlining the work the Board had done on the Ordinance and explaining the Bulletin which compared setback distances, noise restriction requirements and fees of the two Ordinances. The following are some of the items discussed at the Hearing:

1. A resident spoke and said that the sound levels that the Ordinance has are lower than the sound levels of natural wind measured on Blackcap Mountain. She had spoken with Travis of Eolian and he told her this. She said she had more information from Eolian. She had also been told that if this Ordinance is passed we will never be able to allow a facility in town and thus would lose out on 2 million dollars in revenue.
2. Another resident asked that the Board explain Mitigation Waiver. He was told that it was an agreement between the developer and the landowner. The Board has to see the signed agreement but they do not have to see any financial agreement between the two parties. This agreement has to be recorded at the Penobscot Registry of Deeds.
3. The Board was also asked to explain why a mitigation waiver was allowed for some setbacks and not others. He was told that no waiver could be negotiated for less than 1500' from a tower. 1501' to 5280' is negotiable.
4. A resident thanked the Board for their work on the Ordinance. He said the only people that make money on Wind Energy Facilities are the developers. If the Town does get 2 million dollars in income, we will lose revenue sharing and school revenue from the state thus affecting the actual benefit from the towers. His research has shown that large-scale mountain-top wind facilities do not work. He commended them for looking out for the citizens of town. He felt the Ordinance does not close the door on development, but makes them have to work to fit our Ordinance.
5. The resident who had spoken with Eolian felt that maybe they should change the sound regulations because companies are saying they would not be able to build turbines with these rules. She said there are wind facilities in other areas that work. A member of the Board explained that they had done much research on the subject and suggested that we could learn from the mistakes of other people.

6. Another resident said that what the Planning Board has done is in the best interest of the Town.
7. A resident explained that we produce more energy than the State of Maine uses now. He feels Wind Towers are blowing up mountains to supply power to the New England grid. He is also concerned about the ecological damage they produce. They blow the top off mountains and erect a tower that may be there for 10, 20 or 30 years, but the mountaintop is gone forever. He commends the Board for a great job. He feels that ecologically and financially Wind Energy does not work.
8. A resident gave the Board paperwork regarding the viability of wind towers in any other part of Town other than Blackcap Mountain. He also gave them a letter from Cianbro that explained that they would not be interested in pursuing the development of a wind project given the current ordinance restrictions. The resident feels that wind towers would be a source of revenue to the town.
9. The resident that explained that we would lose state revenue (see item #4), said that a developer will tell you anything. Eolian has never erected a tower. He feels the Ordinance is the healthy and safe way to go.
10. Another resident explained that he had wanted to be on the Wind Power bandwagon, but after much research has found that wind towers cost more and the energy is more expensive. He said that the state will give us less money once we start getting money from another source. He feels that the Ordinance protects the town and allows for future technology to fall within the Ordinance. He further explained that there are currently about 27 bills before the legislature to roll back the work of the two previous legislative sessions and correct it. They are look at slowing down wind energy development and looking at the State Ordinance because it is so unrestrictive. He feels we will see more Ordinances like the one the Planning Board has developed.
11. A resident explained that if this Ordinance does not pass, someone can come in with an application and we would have nothing to regulate a development. She thanked the Board.
12. Another resident thinks that the Ordinance is too restrictive in the noise and sound regulations. A member of the Board said that there are videos on line from Wisconsin showing the sound produced. Another Board member explained that the state studied the Mars Hill Project and were satisfied that the noise level was acceptable but other studies have shown them as too high. Since the towers have been erected, numerous people have complained of health issues and 100% say their quality of life has changed.
13. A Board member said that as new technology is developed and there is more reliable data, we can revisit this Ordinance. A windmill may be developed and be much quieter and may fall into the Ordinance. He explained that we need an Ordinance and encouraged everyone to vote for it. There is a program on Wind Turbines that presents both sides on MPBN.
14. A resident said that he went to a Wind Energy Conference and the President of the University of Maine said that he has a tower that is working and the University is involved with Wind Energy projects. A resident responded by saying the UMO is given money to research a project such as Wind Energy and it does not mean they are in favor of them, but that they are researching onshore and offshore development with the grant received.
15. The Board informed the group that voting on the Ordinance will be at the Town Meeting at the Eddington School on March 22, 2011 at 7:00 pm.

The Public Hearing Closed at 7:22 pm.

MINUTES: Motion to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2011 and January 27, 2011 meetings with the amendments suggested by Susan Dunham-Shane by Gretchen Heldmann, Frank Higgins 2nd. All in favor.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: The next meeting will be February 24, 2011. The Board will address areas of the Ordinance that they wanted to revisit after the Public Hearings. Items they want to work on include the issue of abandonment and the consequences of a partial or complete abandonment, presenting the Large and Small Scale Ordinances as one Article in the Warrant and if the 10% put into an escrow account for decommissioning is enough and if whether enough will be collected within 10 years. The Board also feels that the explanation of the ordinance at Town meeting needs to clarify that they are voting on an Ordinance and not whether they want or don't want Wind Towers. At the next meeting they will nail down the Ordinance and send the final draft to the Selectmen for the March 1, 2011 meeting.

The Board also needs a report for the Town Report.

There is more work to do on the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances so they will be voted on at a Special Town Meeting.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 7:47 pm by Gretchen Heldmann, Henry Hodges 2nd. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Knowles