



Springwater Preservation Committee

Informational Update
Edition #1 — April 2006

Springwater Preservation Committee P.O. Box 128 Springwater, NY 14560

Landmark Legislation

On March 20, 2006—the Springwater Town Board approved legislation to allow, and supposedly regulate, industrial wind plants (WECS) by a 3 to 2 vote. The fact is that potential 400' industrial wind plant sites in Springwater are limited to a small number of ridges and hilltops in the eastern part of the Town.

In spite of the fact:

- that a public hearing/referendum, and a heavy write-in vote in the last election for an anti-wind candidate, have demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that the overwhelming majority of residents in the potentially-affected area are totally opposed to life under a wind turbine.



In spite of the fact:

- that at a public hearing on the proposed law, twenty-two speakers *unanimously* pointed out that the proposed law was inadequate and failed to offer them any real protection, not one person spoke in favor of or said the law was adequate.

Under Supervisor Walker's lead, the Board has SOLD OUT the overwhelming majority of nearly half of the Town. It is important to note that of the three board members that voted in favor of the law, not one lives in the area that would be affected. Do they have such little regard for our welfare? What we still don't know, is at what price they sold us out. They can wallow in their victory now, but the fight is far from over.

In the end we believe truth and decency will prevail.

What's WRONG with the Springwater industrial wind turbine (WECS) law?

The law states its purpose as "protecting the general public...and properties adjacent to a WECS from indiscriminate placement, related health and safety problems, etc."

People should understand that in most communities where this kind of law is written, a planning board or special committee is designated to do in depth research, develop some level of expertise and prepare a draft law. However, in Springwater our Town Supervisor refused offers of assistance from concerned citizens and had the town attorney (who has no expertise in drafting such legislation) copy almost word for word a very unrestrictive law from another town and make it our own with only minor (even less restrictive) changes.

But due to public pressure, the law was revised to add some protection to the town as a whole. However, recommendations protecting individuals living within the immediate area of the sites and concerns of neighboring towns were totally ignored.

It would take more time and space than we can afford, to explain in depth all the ways in which the law is grossly inadequate, but some of the highlights are as follows:



- It allows a setback of only 600 feet for a 400-ft. tower, which is ridiculous and even much less than the state recommended minimum.
- It allows a noise level of up to 50 decibels, which is known to be disruptive of sleep and cause real health problems. Even with that, there is no realistic way of enforcing this limit in spite of the recognized fact that WECS commonly exceed the allowed noise level for extended periods of time and especially at night.
- It fails completely to address the issue of low frequency noise, damage to wells from blasting, changes in the water table or damage from ice throws. It provides no protection to those subjected to blade glint, shadow flicker or tower lightning.
- There is no protection for loss of property value or compensation to those injured or inconvenienced by the project.
- There is no protection in the event of damage to TV reception.
- There is no required decommissioning plan. In other words, when these towers become outdated, dysfunctional or pose a significant public health risk and need to be taken down, who is going to be responsible?

In addition, the law is poorly written and contains technical errors that could have been easily corrected had the Town Supervisor been willing to take suggestions from the public. In general, the law is a joke and insult to the citizens of this town.

Git 'Er Done

There are a total of 18 Towns in Livingston County.

- At present 16 of these towns *have* a Town Planning Board. Springwater is obviously one of the two which has none.
- Of those 18 Towns only 4 **do not** have (or have in preparation) a Town Comprehensive Plan. Springwater is obviously one of the 4 **without** such a plan.

Supervisor Walker has said he is opposed to a Town Comprehensive Plan or a Planning Board. Is the Supervisor afraid that, if a broad cross section of residents and property owners were brought together they just might have a few good ideas about plans and goals for the future of the Town? Might this make the Supervisor and his council look bad or reduce their monopoly on power? Sometimes it is good to be different and sometimes it is just plain stubborn and stupid. Having no plan and no vision is almost always STUPID. Someday, it will happen; so why wait? Do we have to wait another 20 years, like the hamlet had to wait 20 years for a sewer system that could have been all done and paid for by now???

WHERE IS PPM ATLANTIC?

At a February Board meeting, Supervisor Walker was asked by a citizen, when was the last time he had talked to anyone from PPM Atlantic regarding the Bishop Wind Farm. He admitted that he had not heard from PPM for at least six months. Another citizen asked whether, in view of the time elapse, if he would contact them again and inquire as to the status of the proposed Bishop Wind Farm. Mr. Walker said he did not want to do this, but other Board members thought it was a good idea *and* a reasonable request, so he finally, reluctantly agreed to do so. At the next two board meetings in March, Supervisor Walker reported that he had made numerous calls to PPM, had left messages, but that no one has returned any of his calls. At this point he has no intention of making any further attempts. VERY INTERESTING!

If we generously give the Supervisor the benefit of the doubt, there appear to be two possibilities:

1. The Town Supervisor has known for several months that PPM was withdrawing their plan to build industrial wind turbines in Springwater but was unwilling to disclose it to the public; or
2. Mark Walker, as Town Supervisor, should have known it but didn't, and is, therefore, basically incompetent.

As the first possibility would seem more likely, let us remind ourselves that our Town Board and Town Supervisor have a responsibility to keep the public informed of what is occurring in our town, including potential industrial development. This is not a matter where the public has been passive or uninvolved. Many of us have spent hours, days, months devoted to educating the public and our town officials on the potential dangers such a development poses to our community. We have attended town board meetings and public hearings to voice our concerns. Are we going to be satisfied with keeping a Town Supervisor in office who is unwilling to inform the public on something as important as this? AND are there other issues that he is withholding information about?

COMMUNITY

Help Save Our Springwater Now

Would you like to see:

- Vacant abandoned buildings securely boarded up?
- Junk cars and abandoned trailers cleaned up?
- The old Town Hall building look decent?
- Free or reasonable prices for bulk trash?
- Periodic Supervisor's Reports in the paper?
- A long term comprehensive plan for the Town?
- Better use of commercial buildings on Main Street?
- Nice Springwater signs on Route 15 and Route 15A?
- Holiday decorations on Main Street at Christmas time?

Please consider helping SPC carry on the effort for better and more responsible government in Springwater. Donations (none are too small) can be sent to: Springwater Preservation Committee – P.O. Box 128 – Springwater, NY 14560.

And thanks for listening.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Wish It Weren't So,

but having witnessed the last Springwater Town Board meeting it has to be reported that the outcome can only be described as "shock and disbelief". I never dreamed that in America I would ever see the day when elected representatives could be so small and gutless. Before dealing with the agenda item on the Law to Regulate Wind Plants, His Royal Highness, King Mark, with the support of his privy (no pun intended) council, royal followers Florence and Larry, decided to prohibit anyone in the audience, all Town Citizens and Taxpayers, from saying a single word on this subject. Not even a chance to ask a question. Reminds one of a famous public hearing where the King decreed that no one could speak. Yes, we did have a chance to speak before. At the one public hearing on the proposed law, twenty- two speakers (and many others who did not speak) unanimously agreed the law was inadequate and seriously defective. Not one speaker spoke in favor of it or said it was adequate. Supervisor Walker made not one ounce of effort to answer or address any of the questions asked by the speakers. So much for any public dialogue! Having not listened the first time I guess they were bound and determined that they would not have to sit and not listen a second time. With no discussion by those in favor, we are now blessed with their new law. At the conclusion of the meeting the three royalty were asked if they would allow someone to play a boom box at their property line at 50 decibels at 2 am. Per their new law, if it is okay for others to have to accept 50 decibels of noise from wind generators, which are usually loudest at night and have been repeatedly documented to exceed 50 decibels, would they accept 50 decibels at their homes? Not **ONE** of the three would answer the question. Even someone with a dysfunctional brain might interpret that as pure HYPOCRISY!' One more example of our elected officials hard at work on our behalf! Even Socrates could not carry on a dialogue with such closed minds.

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