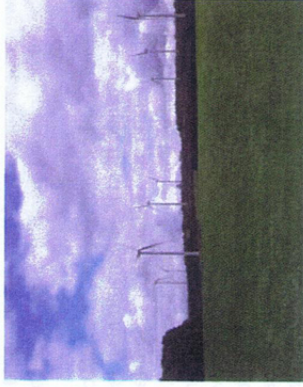


Windparks: Lessons Learned

Harvested by large wind turbines and transferred back into useable energy through the electric companies' various grids and systems, wind energy is being brought to communities across the United States. This is particularly true in small towns with small populations, and big open spaces. When Noble Environmental Power came to the Town of Eagle, New York with the intent of developing the first commercial windpark, the Town of 1,200 had many options and challenges to consider.



The Town realized that facing these challenges on their own would be risky and hired Clark Patterson Lee to assist with environmental review, permitting, and construction observation of the project. The Town of Eagle and Clark Patterson Lee learned many valuable lessons through the development and construction of the Bliss Windpark and Wethersfield Windpark. The Bliss Windpark, a 100.5 megawatt commercial windpark with 67 wind turbines that stand four hundred feet tall, was constructed in 2007 and 2008. The Wethersfield Windpark, a 120 megawatt, 80 turbine project which sited 26 turbines in the Town of Eagle was constructed in 2008 and 2009. Many of these lessons may benefit other communities that are considering commercial wind turbine projects.

Get Educated on Wind: These are unique projects, and they can be polarizing in the community. It is important to become educated on wind turbine projects. Visit host communities, research websites, and talk with representatives from host communities and their consultants.

Retain Knowledgeable Consultants: Proper review and oversight of project development and construction requires that a host community have access to knowledgeable environmental, legal, and engineering consultants to do the, "heavy lifting." It is critical that the host community work closely with the consultants. The various consultants need to work as a team with the host community through all phases of the project.

Develop Community Tools: Communities should be proactive in developing their zoning and local laws regarding commercial wind turbines. There are many existing community documents that may be utilized as resources. Discuss document development with host communities that have wind experience and can offer suggestions to improve upon their documents.

Make A Fair Deal: There are both benefits and drawbacks associated with commercial wind turbine projects. Host communities need to make a financial deal with the developer that will help balance the project's pros and cons, so that the deal is fair to both parties. License Agreements prepared in other host communities can be used as a starting point for negotiations.

Get It In Writing: It benefits the host community, property owners, and developer to put all agreements, requirements, and expectations in writing. Meeting summaries, critical conversations, and commitments should be documented. There are many parties and people involved, changes to the people involved, and long timeframes associated with project development, permitting, and construction, which make verbal and "handshake" agreements problematic. A written record of all requirements and expectations will minimize confusion and disagreements and create a smoother more successful project for all involved.

Be Involved: It is critical that Town Board, Wind Committee, Town & County Highway Departments be involved during all phases of the project and work closely with their consultants to understand the project and make it a success from the community's perspective.

Communication: Open communication is the basis for effective teamwork. Frequent meetings and conversations amongst key participants are critical. Preparation and distribution of agreements, letters, memos, and meeting minutes to all key participants significantly improves communication and working relationships. Keep in mind that developer's first priority is to get the project approved or the construction work done. The host community needs to make sure information is shared, lines of communication are open, and that the concerns of the host community and their consultants are addressed.

Road Use Agreements: The potential impacts to public roadways should be a primary consideration. These projects require a tremendous number of heavy truck trips. Ten wheeler gravel trucks and concrete trucks have a great impact on rural roads that are in poor condition and/or are not designed to carry such loads. Road Use Agreements (RUA) should be clear in expectations, preconstruction reinforcement desires, and post construction repair efforts. Requiring preconstruction bonds and/or post construction

