

At 7:12 p.m. Supervisor Lester called to order a public hearing located at the Town Hall, 18 State Street, Brockport, New York on July 24, 2007. The purpose of the public hearing was to hear all persons for or against the adoption of a moratorium on the construction of wind towers in the Town of Sweden.

Town Board Members present were Supervisor Nat O. Lester, III, Councilperson Robert Carges, Councilperson Patricia Connors and Councilperson Thomas Ferris. Also present were Finance Director Leisa Strabel, Director of Buildings and Grounds Jeremy Oakden, Building Inspector James Butler and Fire Marshal Charles Sanford.

Visitors present were John Zima, 1360 Reed Road; Jim Hamlin, 50 Park Avenue; Rebecca Donohue, 7230 Fourth Section Road; Martin Hermann, 82 White Road; Charilla S. Conner, 4226 Sweden Walker Road; and John Egan, 456 Shumway Road.

Supervisor Lester asked Finance Director Leisa Strabel to read the legal notice published in the Town newspapers. Notice was read.

Supervisor Lester read a comment submitted by telephone by Nancy Hendrick of 963 Beadle Road. Ms. Hendrick supports the concept of wind power as a means to reduce dependency on foreign oil.

Supervisor Lester stated that the Town Board desires a period of time in which to study the issues relating to the construction of wind towers. He said that New York State is considering legislation that would give the State the jurisdiction to make determinations on the location of wind towers. Under the proposed legislation, the State would be the permitting authority and the local municipality would lose that authority.

Supervisor Lester opened the floor to public comments.

John Zima of 1360 Reed Road reminded the Board of the circumstances surrounding the application for the construction of a wind tower on Covell Road approximately 11 years ago. Mr. Zima said that he is in favor of the proposed moratorium.

Charilla Connors of 4226 Sweden Walker Road said that it is an excellent idea to put a moratorium in place to avoid the acrimony that is taking place in the Town of Hamlin. She believes the Town of Sweden needs time to study the issue.

Rebecca Donohue of 7230 Fourth Section Road said that she is in favor of the moratorium but that she is also supportive of alternative energy sources. She believes the Town needs to consider regulations regarding the removal of towers no longer in use, the right of first refusal and the future development of affected land.

Councilperson Carges said that the issue presented an interesting conundrum – open space vs. clean energy.

John Zima asked if the Board would be establishing a committee to study the issue.

Supervisor Lester answered, no, the Board will undertake the work of studying the issues to make the best decision for the community.

John Egan of 456 Shumway Road said that he is not against the moratorium. He would like to see what Sweden's current zoning ordinance restriction would mean to a private wood turbine system that is meant for single family residential use. He suggested that regulations might consider megawatts produced by the tower and density of population as opposed to using setbacks to regulate wind towers.

Councilperson Ferris stated that the Town is interested in looking at alternative energy sources while recognizing property rights in a meaningful way.

John Egan stated that wind towers might help maintain the rural character of the Town. The presence of wind towers might discourage residential expansion.

Supervisor Lester stated that he believes the decision should be left to individual communities and that he hopes the State does not pass legislation to take the decision-making process away from local municipalities.

Hearing no further comments, Supervisor Lester closed the public hearing at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leisa A. Strabel  
Director of Finance