

March 1, 2016

Villanova Town Board
1094 Butcher Road
South Dayton, New York 14138

To the Villanova Town Board:

I am a 33-year resident and the 6th generation of my family to live in the Town of Villanova, I am asking you as respected elected officials and as the SEQRA lead agency to take a conscientious review and question the mitigation of environmental and community impacts by the proposed Ball Hill Wind Turbine Project.

I believe our community's greatest asset and most valuable resource is our picturesque landscape.

It helps define the self-image of our residents who chose to inhabit it and gives them a sense of place. Though the changing seasons it is the dynamic backdrop to people's lives. I hope many of our residents, tourists and hunters value the aesthetic, unadulterated nature of our open, scenic, rolling hills with some views as far as Lake Erie. The decision on whether or not to have an industrial wind facility sited in a community resides within the locality, as New York is a home rule state. Building this industrial project would exploit and ruin our landscape, an irreplaceable asset. RES Americas, the BOP company in charge of constructing this project will request amendment of Villanova and Hanover's wind laws 420 feet limitation on maximum turbine height increased to 498 feet. The year-round visual impact would be significant and cannot be mitigated due to the introduction of 36 500-foot turbines, the height of a 50 story building, the large area of our town involved with the project, the on-going movement of 108 massive rotor blades and the project's total 7.5-mile view shed. It can take as many as 7 trailers to transport the components for one turbine and as many as 60 trailers to transport the large capacity crane, now times that by 36. This will cause considerable disruption to our community.

In 2008, up to 60 389-foot tall industrial turbines with a 50-year lease were proposed to be constructed in Villanova by the Noble Wind Group. Mr. John Bonafide, then coordinator of Historic Preservation Services Bureau of the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic preservation stated in a letter that this project throughout our scenic landscape would have multiple adverse impacts on our cultural resources. It would forever alter and change the rural setting including the communities of Villanova, South Dayton, Forestville, Hamlet,

Hanover and Silver Creek. Types of properties affected are open rural agricultural settings, village/hamlet cemeteries, private homes, churches and businesses. Then in a letter dated Sept 2013 referring to the now Duke Energy proposed wind facility in Villanova, Jennifer Betsworth, a historic specialist in the field services bureau of the same agency concluded their assessment had not changed.

Many rural residents along with our community face a slippery slope having the visual character of their landscapes drastically altered with the proposed 70 turbine Cassadaga Wind Project and the recent approval of the 38-industrial turbine Arkwright Summit Wind Farm. Arkwright's closest turbine will be a mile from one of the 36 Ball Hill Wind turbines. I expect there will be more proposed industrial turbine projects on both sides of county lines. They too will be heavily subsidized by hundreds of millions of dollars of NYS awards or should I say taxpayer awards. NYS awards are funded by a surcharge which is levied on the delivery portion of electric bills of NY retail customers.

Approval of this type of industrial project could cause community discord and division among neighbors as it often has been reported in other rural communities. There are people that have lived here all their lives, for decades, recently moved here, built and renovated their homes, own a summer home, pay their mortgages or plan to sell their home within 20 years. Their home may be their largest lifetime investment towards their retirement. The building of industrial wind turbines could very well devalue their property. Common sense dictates that given two identical properties in a rural area, one that is next to an industrial turbine versus one whose view does not include such a facility is likely considered more valuable. Which one would a buyer choose? This project will affect our residents in different ways whether they measure their property in feet or acres.

But whatever benefits some should not harm others.

Infrasound disturbance, air pressure variations and shadow flicker generated by blade rotation of turbines may cause negative health effects and quality of life issues. These "environmental" problems may be difficult to prove but with approval of this project these problems could adversely affect the people in our own community. Are you willing to roll the dice?

I considerate myself incredibly fortunate to live in a place where I observe bald eagles in flight and at their nesting site. This nest is located less than a mile from some of the proposed turbines. Though a protected species, majestic bald eagles can be killed by rotating turbine blades. This apparently can be mitigated or in other words their death made less severe. 671 of 12 species of raptors were recorded in our area over nine days.

A few years ago after weighing the pros and cons of TV viewing options, I chose to invest in a new antenna to maintain over the air television. It is upsetting and angers me that blade rotation can cause loss of my reception. I ask the board to inquire and make public whether NOAA weather signals are also disrupted. Many people and emergency services in our community rely on Buffalo Doppler for accurate winter forecasting.

If financial problems or disputes arise between subcontractors and companies involved with the construction or ownership of a wind turbine project, can lien notices can be placed on hosting land owners? Has this ever occurred with companies involved in the proposed Ball Wind Project?

It is my understanding NYS does not have decommissioning requirements for wind energy projects. Town of Hanover's Comprehensive Plan is to maintain "the quality of life for residents and their neighborhood and enhance the rural, historic, varied open space and agricultural aspects of life for the community. Am I correct in understanding Villanova does not have a comprehensive plan but includes decommissioning requirements in our local zoning laws? Do we have a removal clause for non-operation for a specified time so that non-removal would then become a zoning enforcement matter? If so, what is that specified time? Wind industrial projects are frequently sold multiple times to different corporations. After 20 years, the town's decommissioning agreement may not be signed with the current owner of the proposed industrial turbine facility. At that time, could it be difficult to impose the town's agreement with a large corporation that might be based overseas? Are land owner lease agreements with project owners in our area beyond 20 years? Can there be a reevaluation, replacement or repowering of the turbines after 20 years? Are wind companies banking on this in the future because the site conditions and wind resources are known and the surrounding community have "increased familiarity" with the presence of turbines? So once there here...

Mr. Norton, Arkwright Town Supervisor, made reference to Article 10 of the Public Service Law in his Dec. 15, 2015 letter to the Observer" The Arkwright project may be the **last** to generate the funding through host agreements negotiated with the local community." Do we have a host agreement and can it still be implemented? Financial issues have surfaced for the community hosting the aging 15-year-old NY Madison Wind Farm and problems are also foreseeable in the near future for NYS' largest and now technology outdated Maple Ridge wind turbine facility. I hope the board has researched any problems in other rural communities due to already located wind turbine facilities.

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Some Villanova residents own seasonal homes, other residents are snowbirds. Due to their absence in our community at this time of year they would be unaware of this project and/or unable to attend this meeting.

In closing, wind power is intermittent, the power capacity could vary between 0 to 100 MW at any given time for a 100MW wind project. Wind power cannot be called on to increase power generation and therefore relies on power from the grid.

Sincerely,

Judy Phillips