

Ogden Township deals with windy problem

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- FOX Toledo News reporter

OGDEN TOWNSHIP, Mich. (WUPW) - A small area of Ogden Township, Mich., in southern Lenawee County, has a big problem.

It's currently in a heated debate over wind energy and the addition of turbines on the land of its residents.

Just over 1,000 residents call Ogden Township home. Forty new neighbors - in the form of 500-foot tall wind turbines - are looking to move in.

Half the residents are welcoming them with open arms, while the other half is saying, no way.

For the past few months, the residents of Ogden Township have been at odds over the future of wind energy in their small town, so much so a citizen committee on the matter has been formed to list all the impacts - both positive and negative. Those against the project have a long list ranging from health to safety concerns.

"Quite Frankly, I just think this is the wrong area for such a project," said Joshua Nolan of nearby Sylvania Township, Ohio. "This area is too densely populated to have this number of turbines."

A financial incentive is a small factor for some who support the installation of turbines. Lower bills and going green are also on the top of the list.

"I see it as being able to participate in a much broader aspect for our country," said Kevin Decatur of Ogden Township. "There have been a lot of things that have popped up over the years. People would say, you know, I'm for it but I don't want it in my backyard. I guess, I'm willing to have it in my backyard."

Multiple residents in the town, including James Goetz, township supervisor, already have contracts in the works to have turbines constructed on their property. But that process will have to wait another six months because of a moratorium that was passed delaying the project until the town agrees and votes on wind energy regulations and restrictions, such as the distance each turbine is from house to house.

"Between the developers, the residents, and the committee, and Township board that we can all sit down and resolve these issues so everyone can benefit," Goetz said.

"There is a lot at stake here and I think everything has to be looked at on these decisions."

The project will go ahead as planned once the moratorium is over and the regulations are agreed upon. But should developers not be able to meet the agreed upon restrictions, construction could come to a halt before it begins.

