



lenconnect.com

The Daily Telegram · Adrian, MI · Serving Lenawee County Since 1892



Riga Township wind turbine ordinance approved

By **David Frownfelder**

Daily Telegram

Posted Jul 07, 2011 @ 05:29 PM

Last update Jul 07, 2011 @ 06:12 PM

Recommend

Be the first of your friends to recommend this.



BLISSFIELD, Mich. — Members of the Interstate Informed Citizens Coalition claimed a victory Wednesday as the Riga Township board approved a zoning ordinance governing wind turbines.

“We are absolutely pleased with this. It was a very courageous vote by the board,” said Kevon Martis, an IICC director and a former Riga Township Planning Commission member. “They listened to the people.”

Key elements of the law require the setback from properties without a wind turbine to be four times the height of a turbine and limits the sound level to 40 decibels between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. and 45 decibels between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

The ordinance had been approved by the Riga Township Planning Commission in May, but turned down by the county planning commission in June. One amendment to the new zoning law requires noise levels to be measured from property lines instead of occupied dwellings. A second amendment stipulates corrections and compensation for television and radio signal interference.

The board approved the proposal on a 4-0 vote with Trustee Dick Beagle abstaining.

An amendment offered by Supervisor Jeff Simon that the setback be reduced to 1.1 times the height of the turbine died for lack of support. After some members of the audience booed, Simon said he made the motion as requested by the county planning commission.

“There is more than one side to a story,” he said. “I had to make the motion even if you don’t agree. Otherwise, I wouldn’t be doing my job.”

Josh Van Camp of Ogden Township is also a director of the IICC. Van Camp said he was pleased with the vote.

“This puts the burden back on the developers instead of the people in the township,” he said. “Now, we will focus on Ogden Township.”

The board heard two hours of public comment before voting on the ordinance. Thirty-nine people spoke — many asking the board to use common sense when enacting a zoning ordinance. However, there was disagreement on what constituted common sense.

A number of people, many of whom are members of the IICC, said they were not convinced of the validity of the claims of jobs that would be created nor with the level of technology used by the wind turbines. Still others said it was a type of development that was at odds with the township’s agricultural nature.

Sarah Smith of Riga said she is in favor of developing alternative sources of energy. However, the size of the proposed turbines is too big for Riga.

“We are talking about a large industrial (project) that does not fit in our rural area,” she said. “Take a cue from history. What are others wishing they had done differently? This is huge. This is industrial. If we don’t have all the answers, maybe we shouldn’t be doing this.”

Several people spoke in favor of the project, saying alternative sources of energy are needed.

“It is clean, renewable energy,” Ted Mason of Riga said

Attorney Mike Homier was hired by the township to help draw up the ordinance. He addressed some submitted questions and told the audience of several hundred people that the township is neither excluding nor permitting wind turbines, they are only regulating them.

Representatives of Great Lakes Wind LLC were disappointed with the ordinance and the vote. The Lenawee County-based company has done the most visible work on establishing wind turbines in Riga Township.

“I don’t know what this is going to do. I’m not an engineer,” said Larry Gould, who is president of Great Lakes Wind.

He said one option the company may look at is putting up smaller turbines. Doug Duimering, project manager said he was disappointed.

“We’ll have to go back and try to figure out what our next move might be,” he said.

Representatives from Juwi Wind Corp. attended but did not comment. Juwi, based in Cleveland, is one of the companies looking at Lenawee County and northwest Ohio as sites for wind turbines. Orisol Energy US Inc., is another. Great Lakes LLC, is affiliated with Exelon Wind, a division of Chicago-based Exelon Corp., a company with a variety of power-generating businesses.

The wind energy companies are seeking to erect some 200 wind towers in Fairfield, Riga, Palmyra and Ogden townships. Riga and Fairfield townships are developing zoning ordinances covering wind turbines.

Great Lakes has signed contracts with Consumers Energy and Detroit Edison to supply electricity. Gould previously explained that Riga is a good location because the wind is there and it is close to the transmission grid, which reduces the expense of developing the wind farm and bringing the energy to market.

The meeting had been originally scheduled for June 30 at the Riga Township Hall. However, nearly 300 people turned out and because the hall can only safely seat 200, the board postponed the meeting. The meeting Wednesday was in the Blissfield American Legion Hall.

Copyright 2011 The Daily Telegram. Some rights reserved

Popular Videos



Did "News of the World" target 911 victims?



America's Dirty Secret: Child Sex Trafficking



Still no resolution in debt ceiling negotiations



Shuttle Atlantis on final ISS visit



'A-Rod' to Have Knee Surgery Monday



Army Amputee Thrown From NY Roller Coaster, Dies

Comments (12)

zigdawgt

4 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

Could someone please tell me what, if any good this is going to do for the residents of Lenawee County? Cheaper electric would be a great start. It seems to me that Consumers has been putting a awful lot of money into the intersections and pole upgrading in the Riga area on US 223. Is this an already done deal? Why would Consumers be putting so much upgrading in such a remote area? The residents should be the ones to benefit along with the investors and companies involved because we have to deal with the effects of these structures and sacrifices for years and years to com, while the big whigs drive off in their Mercedes and BMW'S and can hardly have enough time to count the cash comin in.

wolfmanwon

4 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

IICC Intimidation

As predicted and reported the Interstate Informed Citizens Coalition, Inc. members chantings and booing were to intimidate and control the meeting. Supervisor Jefferee Simon has warned in past meetings and again warned the crowd that such behavior would not be tolerated. Handouts at the door of the meetings schedule also warned of zero tolerance of bad behavior. Participation of pro wind residents has dwindled as angry IICC members have intimidated local residents. IICC members gave misleading information one example regarding polling of Riga residents when no such official poll was done or results revealed. Today I asked several of my neighbors if IICC were polling the area, none were approached. Supervisor Jefferee Simon at one point responded to hecklers with justification as to why he proposed amending the zoning to include recommendations from Lenawee county Commissioners. He said his mail was full of residents who support less restrictive zoning to more closely follow eight other counties. Again the meeting was far from representative of Riga residents.

donquixote

4 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

[Empty comment box]

Report Abuse

It looked to me like Supervisor Simon will not be tolerated much longer.....

donquixote

3 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

[Empty comment box]

Report Abuse

Wolfman:

As has been explained to you many many many times, the IICC is nothing but local residents, despite your false claims to the contrary. But the now defeated wind developers were virtually all outsiders.

You repeatedly claim to know that the pro-wind residents are in the majority. How do you know that? Did you too go door to door with recall ballots? Did you too make phone calls to encourage people to be involved in the process?

The township board obviously disagrees with you, 4-0, including your beloved Supervisor Simon.

And do you really think the board made their decisions based upon their citizens decision to applaud or boo at the meeting? Really?

If the ordinance goes to referendum, you will see that the man from the iicc who quoted percentages of support and objection will be accurate, far more so than your wild and baseless rants and speculations. You lost, it's over, deal with it.

HeyYou

3 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

[Empty comment box]

Report Abuse

Wind turbines are going to cause the cost of electricity to go UP. Not down.

Hogs Get Slaughtered

3 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

[Empty comment box]

Report Abuse

Nice Try Woof

Attempting to portray the area residents (IICC) as thugs. How pathetic. Get real, you are completely out of touch. Residents are passionate for sure, about protecting their families from real health threats, and keeping their country environment from turning into a built up mega industrial zone. The agenda of the residents is NOT hidden. If not clear to you by now, the residents and the leaders of Riga have spoken, and taken a stand to protect the health and welfare of residents first, ahead of huge corporate profits for a few, at the expense of residents who actually live here. Do not insult us by claiming the township is being too restrictive, that is not the townships problem. If developers had convinced enough to sign, they could build in Riga with this ordinance. It is clear now the support is not there. This is the wrong place for this, period.

concernedhomeowner

3 days ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

[Empty comment box]

Report Abuse

Sad how money changes peoples integrity and loyalty toward one another. Being a lifer of the community and never even considering any other place to reside now seems like a very naive decision.

I have grown up on a farm environment, never blessed with the opportunity to farm on a scale to be able to do it as a way of life, and still enjoy and respect all landowners. But, am very disappointed to have witnessed the actions and thoughts of some, not all, when money is at stake.

Money that they never had before and somehow have done quite well without. but I guess it is never quite enough. I am very happy to say that I do know of several that are not for this, but are still in good financial states, content with what they have been blessed with, for many generations, and will be around for many more, if they so choose, without help by SUBSIDY.

Subsidy has become a way of life for some, every opportunity to gain by others expense, not just in a monetary way, but any means that will get them ahead of others, Bigger, bigger, bigger, more, more, more. I noticed many of these people in in their later years, still striving for more, that to me is sad. Wonder how God will respond to all of us when we meet him after this life has run its course and we get into the real reason why we are all here, will we have pleased him?

Life is about Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control, not SELF INDULGENCE. The reason that the IICC had to form was to protect from the BULLIES, now that they have, they are now being called BULLIES? That's all you can come up with?

What's next WOLFMAN(LOST), whoever you are! COME OUT OF YOUR HIDING! Show all who is talking, then debate one on one with all your wisdom! Wake up and see that we are not your little grade school misfits you get to kick around! When you can come to your real manly way and admit this is all about you, without regard to others, and show consideration of others lives, you will then have gained my respect, but you, and the people that are acting with you, are the reason for this mess we are in, in this COUNTRY. SPEND, SPEND, SPEND !!! At others expense, as long as you are on the SHORT TERM gaining end!!!

Henry Ford never received a hand out, the Wright brothers never received a hand out, why do you hold your hand out to us tax payers if you feel this is such a great NEW INVENTION!! Stop hiding behind all the big corporations shelters and confront all face to face on your own, just like the leaders of the IICC have done!

iluvadian
3 days ago
Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

Once upon a time, people thought electricity was a 'real health threat.' From about.com, we read, 'There was opposition from the public to the development of alternating current electricity. Critics, including ... Thomas Edison, argued that it was dangerous and a hazard to health.'

Progress is gonna happen, folks. Get used to it.

<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blwestinghouse.htm>

Hogs Get Slaughtered
3 days ago
Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

Industrial 500ft wind turbines are a health hazard when sited too close to people, that is a fact. I do not consider it progress to be sickened in my home, on my property so some fat cat investors can profit!

Nancy Wheaton
3 days ago
Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Report Abuse

It's nice to see common sense being used down in Lenawee County. We folks up here in Huron County are paying a surcharge to DTE for the privilege of looking at and listening to these turbines. Although not one bit of the electricity being generated is available to our community. It all goes to the other side of the state. I won't even go into the loop that is being built to transport this electricity to the grid. So much for a pristine landscape. As far as jobs created up here by the wind farms, nobody can give a number on that. The people that run the offices for the wind farms are not local people. The farmers that have turbines planted on their property are not creating new jobs. The people that are putting the turbines up are not local. So you tell me, how is this helping our local job market? It's not. Oh, by the way, the Ugly wind farm turbines haven't been spinning for the last two days.

sickofchameleons
2 days ago
Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Empty comment box with a vertical scrollbar on the right side.

Report Abuse

Thank you Nancy for your input as you are living the nightmare we are trying to avoid. God Bless you for sharing. I would truly love to hear what wolfmanwon and Stryker have to say about Nancy's real life comments. NOT IICC putting these words in her mouth!

wolfmanwon

1 day ago

Report Abuse

You must be logged in to report abuse.

Empty comment box with a vertical scrollbar on the right side.

Report Abuse

donquixote:

The recall is just another tactic by IICC to intimidate township officials right out of the agitators handbook! Just because real estate developers and agents were not going to profit here they scheme to take down all economic development in the township. Why do you think most of the farming community did not attend the circus township meetings? Whenever the wind developers held meetings there was a full crowd. Why do you think you were kicked off the township planning board? Is this the reason for the \$3000 Simon recall? We could explore this in depth! Going door to door to convince residents that do not follow township politics is just sickening. I heard the horror stories of the signature collectors. Doom & gloom fanatical conspiracies of wide spread wrongdoing....COME ON GIVE US ALL A BREAK!!! Yes people were signing the petition just to get them the hell out of there houses!

To the anonymous concernedhomeowner: You sound like a IICC member threats and all, I've heard them before from your group!

This will only be truly settled with a referendum vote. I'll except that as final on this issue.

[Login](#) or [register](#) to post a comment:



PROGRESSIVE

\$99.00

The Name Your Price® Tool. Only from Progressive

Get Your Free Quote

Enter ZIP Code

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) |

The Daily Telegram | 133 N. Winter St. Adrian, MI 49221

Copyright © 2006-2011 GateHouse Media, Inc. Some Rights Reserved.

Original content available for non-commercial use under a [Creative Commons](#) license, except where noted.

SEO by [eLocalListing](#) | [Advertiser profiles](#) | [RadarFrog Merchant Directory](#)