

However, during several public sessions, citizens stated that the potential for wind generation in the southern hills of the Vernon is evident in the success of the wind farm in Fenner, New York. The Town Ad-Hoc Committee believes that this potential is real and should be an allowed use in appropriate portions of the Town as long as the location of wind turbines does not affect active agriculture.



7.4.1 Wind Generating Facilities

Wind turbines may be used for residential, commercial or industrial purposes and may affect several zoning districts. However, in the Town of Vernon, the most feasible location for wind generators is in the southern portion of the Town where the elevation is high enough to capture wind energy from the Oneida Valley and Lake Ontario. During the planning process, the group consulted the NYSERA wind potential map and decided to include language that will address the use of wind farms in the Town.

The Town must consider several factors when reviewing potential wind energy projects. Some of the factors that must be addressed during Site Plan Review include:

1. Noise levels - Including noise associated with generators and the blades of the turbine.
2. Setback and operation - Including consideration for the potential for failure of turbine blades, or structural integrity.
3. Agriculture - Including the loss of tillable acreage, pastureland or access to viable farmland.
4. Natural Resources - Including recent concerns with FAA lighting requirements and wildlife migration patterns.

"If someone comes in and wants to develop [wind turbines] we should be able to tell them where and how to do it"

- Ad-Hoc Committee Member -

5. Interference - Including interference with both cable and wireless broadcast transmission and emergency service communications.
6. Municipal Boundaries - Including proximity to adjoining municipalities where wind turbines are restricted.

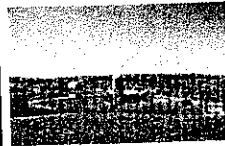
Based upon the issues listed above and the overriding theme of farmland protection throughout the planning process, the Following Goals and Objectives are set forth with respect to wind based power generation.

#### 7.4.2 Clean Energy Goal (Wind Generating Facilities)

The Town of Vernon will encourage clean energy technology that is compatible with agricultural operations in the most appropriate areas of the Town.

#### 7.4.3 Objectives

- The Town will plan for commercial wind generators in the upper elevations located in the Southern area of the Town.
- The Town will direct wind technology that enhances agricultural viability and profitability within Vernon's' agricultural zoning district.
- The Town will encourage the location of wind generators away from active farmland or toward the edge of fields and tillable acreage.
- The Town will discourage the subdivision of farmland into smaller lots to accommodate wind generation projects.
- The Town will encourage wind technology projects that will financially benefit local and regional residents.



"Windmills have a life span of about 20 years but will likely be upgraded during their operation to increase efficiency and life expectancy"

- Cornell Cooperative Extension -

- The Town will discourage commercial and industrial wind generators near population centers and residential areas.
- The Town will discourage wind generators to be visible from designated historic buildings and districts.

#### 7.4.4 Recommendation

##### 7.4.4.1 Require Wind Generation Projects to Meet Minimum Standards Developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

Based upon a review of wind generator operations in the Central New York Region it is recommended that the Town of Vernon adopt Guidelines for Agricultural Mitigation for Wind Power Projects, developed by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (Ag. and Markets) as the standard for reviewing wind power projects throughout the Town. The Town should coordinate any planned wind generation projects with Ag. and Markets and should pursue clean energy opportunities as long as they do not impair or impede active farming. Due to the rural nature of the southern portion of Vernon and the wind potential of higher elevations, local officials should direct any commercial or industrial proposals regarding wind generation to that portion of the Town. Wind turbines for residential purposes should be discouraged in higher density residential areas but should be permitted on residential parcels containing a minimum of 5 acres in area or for self sufficiency purposes on land in the Towns agricultural zoning district.

#### 7.4.5 Implementation Strategies

##### 7.4.5.1 Coordinate Future Project Reviews With NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets

It is recommended that the Town direct any project sponsor to coordinate wind generation projects with the NYS Ag and Markets prior to the submission of an application for site plan review. This procedure will ensure that the Town utilizes professionals with adequate expertise to minimize the impacts of wind turbines on active agricultural operations.

In addition, this coordination will ensure aesthetic considerations in an effort to reduce the visual impact of wind turbines on the rural character of the Town.

##### 7.4.5.2 Address Wind Energy Systems in Local Zoning Ordinance

It is recommended that the Town amend the current zoning ordinance to address projects specific to wind energy systems and develop permitting requirements for wind generation projects to be used for residential, commercial and industrial uses. As the use of alternative sources of energy is becoming an increasingly popular practice among local governments and developers, it would be beneficial to the Town to be prepared for such proposals by taking a proactive approach to wind energy potential.