

Elect DeFrancesco for turbine zoning

Two years ago, Cape Vincent Town Supervisor Tom Rienbeck issued a letter to voters stating, "it is of the utmost importance that our town land use (zoning) is worded such that it protects residents and the environment from wind farms being improperly located."

Since that time, two more years have passed and it appears that what was of the utmost importance last time he was running has absolutely no significance today. Instead, public input was ignored and under his leadership wind turbines were declared a utility under the existing ordinances. In fact, the number of planned turbines has increased substantially and they can now be placed on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario and anywhere else they can squeeze them in.

The impact of this decision leaves no regulation whatsoever on the number of wind towers allowed in our community, their heights, property setbacks, environmental impacts, noise levels nor site density, and the list goes on. The town supervisor has not even expressed interest in developing a decommissioning plan that would regulate the removal of nonfunctioning, obsolete, rusting turbines.

Now, we enter another election year and Tom Rienbeck has again, suddenly realized that wind turbine zoning is an involved and sophisticated process, one that he says may be addressed next year. Campaign rhetoric is an easy accomplishment for Mr. Rienbeck, fulfilling the responsibilities he was elected to perform and pledged to do appears to be an impossible task. He should have the best interest of all Cape Vincent residents as his priority.

The threat of substantial devaluations on the properties of nonparticipating and neighboring landowners also requires changes to the present zoning. The law should state that compensation will be paid to those landowners by the turbine corporations should a loss of equity occur.

I believe a major change is needed. John DeFrancesco will listen to and respect the opinions of all residents of Cape Vincent. I am also extremely confident that he will waste no time in making wind turbine zoning a reality if elected town supervisor.

GERALD AUBERTINE
CAPE VINCENT