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13-0990-EL-BGN

April 13, 2015

Chairman Andre Porter  
Ohio Power Siting Board  
180 E. Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

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PUCO

Case Number 13-990-EL-BGN

Dear Chairman Porter:

I am writing on behalf of Greenwich Neighbors United (GNU) to congratulate you on your appointment as Chairman of the PUCO and OPSB. GNU is a large and growing group of local property owners who have joined together to coordinate our efforts to voice concerns about a proposed industrial-size wind farm in Huron County. The proposed wind farm that brought forth our concerns and the formation of GNU is pending before the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB), Case No. 13-990-EL-BGN.

In the summer of 2014, many residents of Greenwich began to understand the real significance of the proposed wind farm development that would be erected in our backyard. The developer had filed an application for a certificate with the OPSB and was seeking authorization to install 25 wind turbines, each 490.5 feet tall with rotor diameters of up to 383 feet, and covering 4,650 acres of land. As we started to learn more about the dangers and harmful impacts of the developer's invasion plans, members of our community began to frantically write letters and e-mail messages to the OPSB, many of which you can find in the "public comment" section of OPSB's case file. Unfortunately and as the OPSB was moving the certificate application along quite quickly, it took us a while to realize that our concerns and interests were less likely to be taken into account unless we hired an attorney and intervened in the OPSB proceeding. We are a group of neighbors, many of us farmers, who did not understand the OPSB's formal process or that the concerns expressed in our letters and e-mail messages might be ignored by the OPSB unless we became a "party" to the case. However, we did know that the wind farm that was being proposed would ruin our tranquil rural community and deprive us of our fundamental rights to hold and enjoy property. Along the way, we began to realize that that the OPSB was not looking out for us and it was going to be up to us to make sure our concerns were addressed before the for-profit wind farm developer was allowed to move forward.

As we came to better appreciate the risk of not being a party in the OPSB proceeding, we found a lawyer who was willing to help us at a cost we could afford. He filed a request to allow one of the affected property owners and our members to intervene after the intervention cut-off date so that we might have the rights of a "party". He urged the OPSB to find that there was "good cause" to allow the late intervention. Despite the support we received for this motion from members of the public, this intervention request was rejected at the urging of the wind farm developer. And then the OPSB issued a decision authorizing a certificate without one mention of the safety and other

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concerns expressed in the hundreds of letters and e-mail messages that were submitted to the OPSB. With the help of our attorney and our determination to make sure that our concerns were addressed, we filed an application for rehearing contesting the OPSB's decision. In the several months since we filed the application for rehearing, the OPSB has not addressed the legal and other issues we raised in our application but it did grant rehearing for the purpose of giving it more time to consider the issues we raised in our rehearing application. At this point, no decision has been made.

Over the past nine months, our neighbors have joined together to try to protect our beautiful, peaceful and safe community from being destroyed by a wind farm developer. Along the way, we have learned that:

- 1) The consistent and loud noise of wind turbines can cause health issues, including migraine headaches, vertigo, nausea, tinnitus, and sleep deprivation;
- 2) Birds and bats that help us manage bugs and pests are killed by the blades of the turbines;
- 3) Wind farms destroy the value of land and homes that are located near the windfarm;
- 4) Wind farm developers do little, if anything, to proactively disclose the details of their proposed projects to the property owners and local officials most negatively affected by their proposals and engage in leasing practices that can be predatory;
- 5) As we were writing to the OPSB and urging the OPSB to address our concerns, the OPSB staff, the wind farm developer and the Ohio Farm Bureau were, without any notice to us, working on a settlement agreement which ignored our concerns, a settlement agreement that was filed with and eventually adopted by the OPSB;
- 6) The so-called "benefits" provided to schools by wind farm developers do not overcome the destruction of the local tax base and the local community that is caused by wind farms;
- 7) There are safety issues, such as ice throws, turbine fires, and catastrophic turbine failure that can damage property, injure members of our community and injure people driving on roads near the wind farm property;
- 8) Local fire departments including our volunteer fire department do not have the equipment to address a turbine fire including fires caused by a lightning strike and, absent prudent setbacks, dry grain fields can rapidly spread a turbine fire to dwellings and other property;
- 9) The OPSB has approved wind farm proposals that treat the minimum setback requirement contained in Ohio law as though it is a maximum setback requirement and allowed developers to move forward even though most of the proposed turbine locations violate the minimum setback requirement contained in Ohio law.
- 10) The OPSB ignores the fact that the turbine manufacture's minimum safe distance specification may be greater than Ohio's minimum setback requirement.
- 11) The OPSB has not, since 2008, promulgated the rules that are, according to Section 4906.20(B) of the Revised Code supposed to contain reasonable

regulations regarding wind turbine "... location, erection, construction, reconstruction, change, alteration, maintenance, removal, use, or enlargement and including erosion control, aesthetics, recreational land use, wildlife protection, interconnection with power lines and with regional transmission organizations, independent transmission system operators, or similar organizations, ice throw, sound and noise levels, blade shear, shadow flicker, decommissioning, and necessary cooperation for site visits and enforcement investigations"; and,

- 12) The OPSB is, contrary to the plain language in Section 4906.20 (C) of the Revised Code and despite protests from at least one legislator, allowing wind farm developers to evade the minimum setback requirements without the developer securing a waiver of the minimum setback requirement from ALL owners or property adjacent to the wind farm property.

GNU was formed to help educate the community and public officials about the risks of wind turbines and the developers who place profits above local interests. We have done this on our own time and at our own expense. We have held numerous public meetings, bake sales, raffled off home-made pies, held a chili rally, distributed yard signs, put informational brochures in pizza boxes, and held a soup and song event all to educate the community and raise funds to make sure that our concerns are responsibly addressed before a wind farm developer is allowed to invade and exploit our community.

Throughout our learning process, we have heard from experts on the subject of wind turbines and how harmful they can be on a community and how inefficient they are when it comes to producing electricity or helping the environment.

As the new Chairman of the OPSB, we ask that you grant our application for rehearing, and look at the issues we've raised by so many members of our community. We request another public hearing, so you can hear first-hand from the residents about our concerns if this wind park is developed. Our school board, and many local and state officials have filed comments in opposition to the wind park. We are hopeful that as the new Chairman of the OPSB, you will take all these comments into consideration and allow our community to get back to our everyday jobs and know that we and the generations that follow us will be able to enjoy our peaceful and tranquil community in Greenwich.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ledet  
Chairman, Greenwich Neighbors United

cc: Members of the OPSB  
Senator Gayle Manning  
Representative Terry Boose