

Town of Rensselaerville Comprehensive Plan and Industrial Wind Power – Chart

The Wind Study Committee has paid special attention to ensuring that our recommendations are aligned with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. We consider that plan a guiding document in our recommendations. Because of the size, scope, and complexity of the Comprehensive Plan, it is inevitable that there would be some ambiguity in its guidance. One such small ambiguity exists regarding Industrial Wind Power. However, the overwhelming weight of evidence, in our committee’s judgment, points to the incompatibility of Industrial Wind Power with the Comprehensive Plan.

Page & Section	Comprehensive Plan Reference	Committee Comments
<p>Recommendations Section B Land Use Laws and Other Local Regulations: Sub-Section 3.2 Infrastructure Page 30</p>	<p>“3.2 Establish a new zoning district called “Tall Towers District” to specifically locate and regulate wind turbines. Any wind turbine local law should cover not only locations where they would be allowed, but development standards, required safety measures, construction traffic, setbacks, noise easements, abatement, and wind measurement towers. Specifically disallow any large-scale Wind Turbine project unless it provides significant initial and long-term financial benefit to the town in perpetuity.”</p>	<p>Plan does not advocate for industrial wind turbines. No “Tall Towers District” ever set up.</p>
<p>Recommendations Section B Land Use Laws and Other Local Regulations: Sub-Section 3.3 Infrastructure Page 30</p>	<p>“3.3 Update the zoning law definitions related to “Essential Facilities” to ensure that telecommunication and power companies are included in these regulations. All essential facilities should require site plan review and a special use permit. Review the section in zoning related to Essential Facilities and update. Add definitions for wind mills for personal use, wind towers and meteorological towers and regulated these uses either through the Essential Facilities section or via a separate Cell Tower” zoning district.”</p>	<p>Recommendation to Zoning Review Committee and our Town attorneys to craft a definition of “Essential Facilities” that excludes Industrial Wind Power from that definition. The proof exists in NYSERDA’s own exclusion of Albany County as a viable county for Industrial Wind Power, especially as regards other counties in NY State.</p>
<p>Recommendations Section C Capital Improvements: Sub-Section 1. Infrastructure 1.11 Page 43</p>	<p>“1.11 The Town will own or have a significant ownership stake in any large-scale wind project. (I) (NYSERDA) (TB)”</p>	<p>Black’s Law Dictionary, Seventh Edition defines “own” as: “To have or possess as property; to have legal title to.” This precludes solo ownership by an Industrial Wind developer. This reference does not mean that the town must own an Industrial Wind facility.</p>
<p>Recommendations Section C Capital Improvements: Sub-Section 1. Infrastructure 1.12 Page 43</p>	<p>“1.12 The Town will accept and support a large-scale wind project only if it is Community Owned and brings a significant long-term financial benefit to the Town. (I) (NYSERDA, NYSBCD) (TB)”</p>	<p>Again, “Community Owned”. It is highly unlikely that the Town can raise the capital for this endeavor.</p>

Page & Section	Comprehensive Plan Reference	Committee Comments
<p>Recommendations Section D Programs and Policy Initiation: Sub-Section 2. Economic Development 2.27 Page 50</p>	<p>“2.27 Carefully consider the development of wind farms as a source of clean energy where the turbines will not significantly impact the valued scenic views of the Town. (O) (NYSERDA) (TB)”</p>	<p>The committee has carefully considered this option. Industrial Wind towers are placed on high elevations. A 400’ plus foot tower including blade height, with top of tower night lighting to meet FAA requirements, would inevitably negatively impact the scenic views of the Town.</p>

Page & Section	Comprehensive Plan Appendix Reference	Committee Comments
<p>CompPlan Appendix p235</p>	<p><u>Energy Needs</u> Explore & develop alternative energy options Biofuel station Wind power Alternative energy possibilities Statements: Still beautiful, still near the same population levels, clean air and water, hunting opportunities, wind power, solar power, water power-anything but oil.</p>	<p>The Town of Rensselaerville does not have the <i>sustained</i> level of wind speed to make Industrial Wind generation viable.</p>
<p>CompPlan Appendix p235</p>	<p><u>6. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY</u> Wind power owned and operated by Rensselaerville stock holders, with them using this power for home businesses Solar power, community lighting Support and develop alternative energies</p>	<p>Again, intent is clear. Only large scale wind if owned by/within the Town of Rensselaerville. However, for the Town to own and provide its own wind power it would need to become its own Power Authority. To do that it would also need to build its own infrastructure – separate from the regional power grid - which would be prohibitively expensive.</p>
<p>CompPlan Appendix p242</p>	<p><u>Economics:</u> Town is able to provide much of its own energy through solar, wind, hydro.</p>	<p>Note: Provide it's own energy, not be a staging ground for Industrial Wind Power sold into the grid. Again, not economically viable, for reasons mentioned in line above.</p>

Additional Comments – Comprehensive Plan and Industrial Wind Power:

- Re: Town of Rensselaerville Comprehensive Plan Recommendations Section D: Programs and Policy Initiation: Sub-Section 2. Economic Development 2.27 Page 50 charges the Town as follows:
“2.27 Carefully consider the development of wind farms as a source of clean energy where the turbines will not significantly impact the valued scenic views of the Town. (O) (NYSERDA) (TB)”
<http://www.rensse-laerville.com/townforms.php>
- The Rensselaerville Wind Study Committee was established to achieve this goal. “The Wind Study Committee Purpose and Goal Statement” approved on February 24, 2009 and revised March 7, 2009 references the importance of the town’s comprehensive plan as a guiding element in our work.
<http://www.rensse-laerville.com/minutes/WindStudy/Wind%20StudyPurposeGoals.htm>
- Under “Committee Goals and Outcomes:” the wind study committee states:
“To align our recommendations with the Town of Rensselaerville Comprehensive Plan finalized March 8, 2007.”
The committee has crafted its recommendations based upon in-depth study and careful consideration of the meaning and intent of the Comprehensive Plan adopted March 8, 2007.
- While there are references in the Comprehensive Plan that might imply a possible potential acceptance of Industrial-Industrial Wind Power, the huge weight of evidence points to the exclusion of large scale Industrial Wind Power once all the information has been carefully considered.
- The recommendation to prohibit Industrial Wind Power within the Town of Rensselaerville is the result of more than a thousand collective hours of research, meetings, conversations and explorations by the Wind Study Committee and the result of a thorough and reasoned process.
- There are those who would argue that Industrial Wind Power will maintain rural character because the lease payments from wind developers will allow farmers to keep their land rather than selling it to be sub-divided. We disagree with that argument on several bases:
 - Industrial Wind Installations can break up farms – only in a different manner than tract housing development. A review of the leases that farmers sign often gives the developer a range of rights that allows them to cut in roads and lay electrical infrastructure across fields often interfering with a farmer’s operations.
 - The installation of 400 foot tall industrial turbines with their related infrastructure, power stations, ongoing variety of noises, wildlife impact, and necessary ongoing maintenance would negatively impact the quality of rural atmosphere that our comprehensive plan calls for.