

MANITOWOC

## Herald Times Reporter

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## LOCAL NEWS

Posted Jan. 11, 2005

## Residents upset over wind farm issue

### Two Creeks won't appeal decision by county board

By Neil Rhines  
*Herald Times Reporter*

TWO CREEKS — The town of Two Creeks voted Monday night to not file an appeal to question a decision allowing a wind energy farm to be built in their township.

The appeal essentially would have investigated whether the Manitowoc County Board of Adjustment used the county's wind energy ordinance in making their decision on Dec. 20 to grant Navitas Energy, Inc., a Minnesota-based company, a conditional use permit to build 49 wind turbines, at 471-foot tall, on private land in the towns of Two Creeks, Mishicot and Two Rivers, collectively called the Two Creeks Wind Farm.

In making the decision, much to the disappointment of many in the tightly packed assembly in the Two Creeks Town Hall, Chairman Ken Duveneck said he felt the citizenry should have the right to appeal the decision. Duveneck, as well as Supervisor Norbert Stangel, voted not to appeal the board's decision. Supervisor Lee Engelbrecht voted for the appeal.

One of the people in the audience, Anita Rogers, asked the town to appeal the decision not by taking sides on the issue, but to ensure the process was handled correctly.

Roger Lehrmann of the town of Two Creeks asked if there was any chance the wind farm could be stopped. Bill Powell, an attorney representing the township, said this was "highly doubtful."

Powell said the appeal, even if filed, would do little to stop the wind farm from materializing. He said the appeal would be successful in halting the project (on schedule for completion by the beginning of 2007) if it could be proven that the board didn't follow the county's ordinance on wind farms, or that the wind farm would adversely affect people's health and safety.

Powell also added that one of the potential roadblocks for the wind farm, that of health and safety, "is about as vague as (Manitowoc County's ordinance)," and therefore wouldn't stand much of a chance.

  
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Many in the audience don't believe the county ordinance adequately addresses issues like noise, ice fling and shadow flicker. Ice fling is ice that, when it collects on the blades, can catapult off of the blades as they to spin. Shadow flicker is the shadow of the spinning blades, which can reflect in various areas depending on the time of day and direction of sunlight.

Noise, according to Stangel, is not a problem. Stangel investigated several wind turbines in Kewaunee County and said they weren't noisy enough to interrupt a conversation in a normal tone of voice.

Another area of concern expressed by the audience is that the 471-foot tall towers with 139-foot-long blades are far larger than the vast majority of wind turbines in the country.

Because there aren't many this size, data of this sort from other, similar projects, are not readily accessible. Therefore, it can't be proven to be a problem until after it is built, Powell said.

According to the Chairman of the Manitowoc County Board, Paul Hansen, the county board had not received any information from people opposed to the idea of a wind farm at county board meetings. Hansen said he is also concerned that the issue will only be resolved in the courts.

He could be right.

According to William Strasser, of the town of Two Creeks, the next step following the denial is to proceed with private counsel.

"If the town isn't going to help us, we're going to have to do it ourselves," said Kris Strasser.

Outside of the town hall Monday night, as the snow began to come down, several people were soliciting signatures from people opposed to the wind farm, and others busied themselves handing out information on how to contact their state legislators for help on the issue.

One thing is for certain, the town of Two Creeks may have denied the appeal, but the fight over whether a wind farm will grow in northeastern Manitowoc County is far from over.

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