

May 26, 2016

Apex meeting comes up short

A hastily called meeting by Apex Clean Energy resulted in the release of preliminary and nonbinding information from the Department of Defense (DoD) regarding the potential impact massive industrial wind turbines will have on the Military Operating Area (MOA) surrounding Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS). Apex declined to furnish any of the information which it had presented to the DoD, claiming it was “business proprietary.”

Apex has proposed the installation of approximately 70 of the hulking structures in the towns of Barker and Somerset, in Niagara and Orleans counties, which could top 620 feet, making them the tallest structures in New York State outside of New York City, and possibly, the tallest industrial wind turbines in the United States.

The meeting at Apex offices in Barker was conducted by Taylor Quarles, Apex develop manager. Dave Belote, senior vice president at Cassidy and Associates and former Apex employee, shared results of Apex conversations with Department of Defense and Air Force officials. Cassidy and Associates is a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm, hired by Apex to push for approval of the industrial wind turbine project.

“This was really more of the same,” said Pam Atwater, president of Save Ontario Shores (SOS). “Apex makes vague statements and then refuses to give the public access to the data that they were based upon. We did not hear anything that has changed our position. Apex will use every option available to them, including using high-paid D.C. lobbyists, to try and force this project upon communities that have legitimate concerns about the impact of the project on local employment and have clearly expressed they do not want the wind turbines installed.

“SOS is deeply concerned with the next Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) process. If the DoD, which is under extreme pressure from the Obama Administration to engage in green energy initiatives, were to rule that the Apex project is not an encroachment into the MOA, there would be nothing preventing a future BRAC, under a different administration with different priorities, from overruling the decision and concluding that some level of encroachment does exist. Sacrificing what is now an encroachment free MOA could place NFARS, which has already faced closure recommendations from the last two BRAC’s, in jeopardy.”

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Apex Meeting

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The DoD has conducted only a preliminary review of the proposal and will not issue a final determination until a comprehensive study has been done on both flight and radar operations. This will occur only after the actual location and size of the structures has been released by Apex.

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