

Ted Conkling post

I have no problem with folks protesting in this country. I live in Ford County and I was able to see a flyer that was against putting wind turbines near Fairbury or in the Prairie Central school district. First of all, the claim discounting school funding is not documented on the flyer as truly accurate. Schools will receive more funding through the windmills. The balance between the revenue generated from the windmills and state aid will always be hard to explain, but school districts will come out ahead in overall money. Yes, windmills depreciate with time, but don't most things? Still, in respect to the depreciation, more money will still be available to school districts. State funding for education has remained stagnate and in many cases is less than it was. So, you have to ask, why would a school not want anything that increases revenue? Hey, if you don't believe me, ask Saunemin Grade School, Ridgeview School District, and Flanagan School District. It is a no brainer. As far as the health issues documented on the flyer, where and who did this research? I can find research that says that there are no health risks to wind turbines and if you are looking at that pediatrician out east who has coined the unproven "wind turbine syndrome" well I would say that you have an ally there. Do the authors of this flyer own cell phones? There are some folks that say that cell phones cause cancer. Do these folks own microwave ovens? Same thing. Both have radiation which is a carcinogen which could cause cancer. How about some of the pesticides or weed killers that farmers use. You do not have to look that far to find out that some of the chemicals used in the weed killers or pesticides are linked to causing cancer. The point is that there are many things that we use and are around on a daily basis that can cause much more than a headache or insomnia. As far as the birds or bats, geez, I kill several birds a year with my car. Should we outlaw cars? There are many more cars in this country. Cars also pollute. Wind turbines are clean. Let's also take a look at the Nuclear plants which, at some time in the future, will be off-line because these plants really have an end to their production. What has the possibility of killing thousands, a nuclear plant or windmills? If a windmill stops working it does not meltdown. I can understand the argument that a group of folks just doesn't want wind turbines in their backyard. But, to scare people using political campaign ad type of flyers is kind of, well, never-mind. I do respect your views though.

Deb Conroy comment

I know for Dwight schools they have been a great source of extra funds because our schools along with 3 others have an Enterprise Zone Agreement with the company. We agree to abate their property taxes, which keeps them off of our state aid calculation and they pay us half of what it would have cost them in taxes. This money is then used as we need, not split up

between all of our separate funds. It has been a Godsend for our GS district, which has been struggling keeping enough money in their Education fund to survive...

Al Whitman comment

OK, Ted, very respectfully disagree with some of your statements. As to financial benefits to school districts, you're more in touch with that than I, but the data reported by ISU professors at the PC school board meeting showed only a five percent net gain in revenues from wind turbines after the first two years in operation. And that amount decreases every year as turbines are depreciated. As to the health effects of wind turbines, I don't think we have enough data on long term effects of noise, infrasound, ambient pressure, flicker, etc to make a determination as to their safety. I believe many variables are involved in determining whether or not individuals or a residence are affected by nearby turbines, but we cannot predict who may or may not be affected. Fine if you're not the one affected, horrible if you are. Fifty years ago, there was no public data on the dangers of cigarettes and look where we are as a society today. As to the comparisons to cell phones and microwaves, those are (as well as cigarettes) items I can choose not to employ if concerned about adverse effects. Not so with turbines. A turbine can be placed within one-quarter mile of my residence without my approval and my only recourse is...to move. As to the comparison to hog farms and pesticides, we live in a rural community and while we may not always like them, we expect that certain agricultural inconveniences are a possibility. But to live within the boundaries of an industrial energy generation facility (which a wind turbine footprint and distribution system is) is not something that could be anticipated. I would agree that the dangers of turbine "meltdown" relative to a nuclear facility is negligible. However, when turbines quit working, they need to be removed. I know that the energy companies are to have a decommissioning fund in place for this purpose...and the State of Illinois is supposed to have a fully-funded pension system, too. The way in which energy companies are bought and sold, I have serious concerns as to whether there will be ANY funds when the useable life is done. As to the "green" side of wind energy, turbines do not generate electricity when the wind doesn't blow. That means more conventional generating plants have to be built as "backup" systems for the turbines. The more turbines built, the more backup needed...not so "green". Also, the production of wind generation systems is heavily subsidized by the federal government...the taxpayers...you and me. If the efficiencies of the system are so great, why the subsidies? I'm not opposed to alternative energy sources but I think would be much better served if they were more consumer/residential based and also incorporated energy conservation measures. Wow, this makes me tired... if you'd like to discuss this topic further, stop by and we'll debate this over an adult beverage sometime...I'm always open to listening

to divergent opinions...

Ted Conkling to Whitman

Al, I will not argue with you as I have a great amount of respect for you and have no problem with your position especially since it has no impact on Tri-Point. I will have to respectfully disagree with you on most of what you said, but that is alright. I have been to many wind turbine conferences and believe it or not, there are both sides presented, especially at the one I went to at IIT in Chicago for three days, I think a couple of years ago. I and especially Dewey Haag have researched all aspects of wind turbines for years now and we have went in depth especially with the school funding. As you know Tri-Point's revenue is pretty limited. We will see a great increase in revenue with the 88 larger wind turbines, the Kelly Creek Wind Project, that is slated to be built within the next couple of years just north of Kempton in Rogers Township. This revenue, alone, will positively impact our longevity as a school. I would tell you good luck on your efforts. Hey, if you don't want them maybe they could move over here. I think we would welcome with them with open arms. As Congressman Les Arends used to say, "A pancake had two sides."

Whitman to Conkling

Thanks, Ted, I always appreciate your input and ideas. We'll have to respectfully agree to disagree on this topic...and that's OK. You, Dewey and others have done your due diligence and become educated on the subject and I wish everyone would do that. The fact that we may come to differing conclusions is how we look at and weigh the data that is presented. The biggest problem that has been caused by this particular issue is to drive a wedge between members of the communities involved; the idea that if you hate the idea, you hate the person. I hope that our communities don't become too fragmented over this issue and opposing sides continue discussions over this and other matters. Always appreciate your well-informed thoughts on matters of interest...